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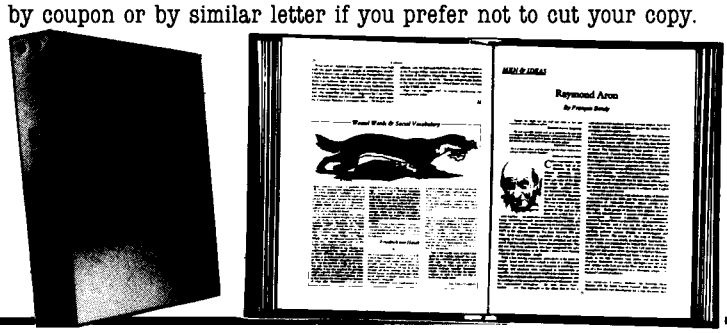

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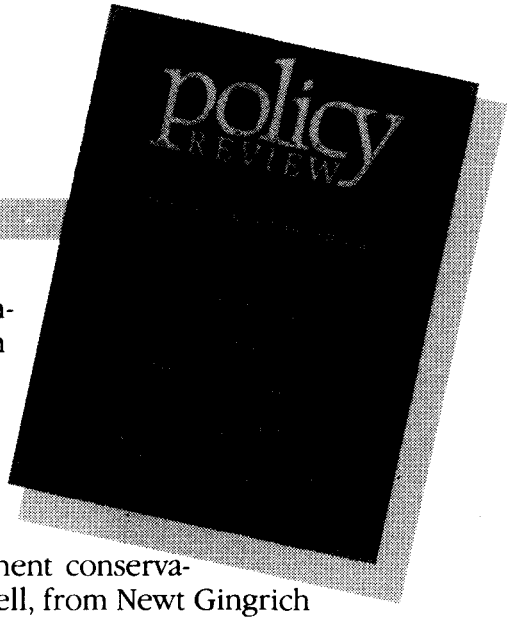

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A. S. Byatt

The Changeling

HE WORE A BLAZER of crushed-strawberry pink, and cream and black stripes and a straw boater, about which he was not confident. He took it on and off, and turned it like a wheel in two hands in front of his flannels. "This time I have a real challenge for you", he said. Some of the garden-party guests had obeyed the injunction "Edwardian dress" on their invitations, and some had not, so that leg-o'-mutton sleeves and silk parasols stood side by side with knee-length silk shirtwaisters and uncovered heads. Josephine Piper was wearing a long grey cotton skirt, a high-necked blouse, and an anachronistic straw hat of her own, not because she liked dressing-up, but because she always complied with requests, if possible, out of courtesy. She inclined her head to Max McKinley, while watching the polite little boys trot busily over the even and sunlit lawns, carrying sausage rolls, miniature pizzas, devils-on-horseback, made in the school kitchens. It was a progressive school: boys were taught cookery. "What sort of challenge?" she asked Max McKinley, smiling. She liked Max, not only because he liked and seemed to understand her writings, though that had been the beginning of the friendship and collaboration. Years ago now, back in the 1960s when her son was the same size as these little ones, he had asked her, then relatively unknown, to come and talk to his boys about her work. And in due course Peter, her son, had come to the school.

Max said, "I want you to have a boy called Henry Smee for a few months. He's a brilliant boy, but not easy. He needs a warm, normal, intelligent house. I think—", Max leaned closer, "he needs you."

"Why?"

"I think—you'll see—I think Henry Smee *is* Simon Vowle in *The Boiler-Room*. It is quite striking."

"How terrible", said Josephine, who had invented Simon Vowle, in a light enough voice. "How terrible for Henry Smee."

"It is terrible. I'm sure you can help him. I'm sure."

"You always ask the impossible", said Josephine, not displeased.

"He goes to Cambridge in the Autumn. I've got him a summer job in a library. He needs a normal life and some understanding."

"I can try", said Josephine. "You'd better introduce us."

She was always very moved and enlivened by the energy of Max's care for his boys. He imagined every quiver, every spasm of young suffering: every boy was new and strange to him: he believed something could be done for all of them: he never gave up. In his place Josephine would long ago have retreated into impersonal efficiency, but she did not tell him that. She did not for a moment believe that Henry Smee had anything to do with Simon Vowle, except in Max's hyperactive imagination. Owing to a series of social activities and evasions she was unable to check on this before Henry Smee was delivered in person, to her house.

THE HOUSE WAS a large Victorian house in South London, a well-proportioned, comfortable, rambling house, far too big for Josephine alone, and too big, even in the days of her household, which had briefly consisted of her husband and son, and then only of herself and Peter. After the stroke of luck which had been Max's invitation to speak, and Peter's acceptance as a weekly boarder at King Edmund's School, she and Peter had tried to fill the bedrooms, surround the dining-table, with guests whom, when they were alone together, they called The Lost Boys. Orphaned boys who would otherwise have spent the school holidays in empty dormitories. Boys whose families were abroad, diplomatically or on business. A taciturn Zulu prince. A nervous, tearful, vegetarian Indian from Mauritius. The boy who had been found stealing and selling transistors and calculators to pay for drugs. The boy who had run away to join a saffron-robed and shaven-headed sect and had come back capable only of intermittent attention and prolonged bouts of sleeping.

Josephine and Peter talked over these boys, late at night, in their absence, sharing their knowledge of their fears, their secret hopes, their relations with the outside world. Peter told Josephine things which she never claimed to know, never referred to when talking to the

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boys, but delicately, she hoped, allowed for and adapted to. Peter was a very sharp observer of other people's fears. He observed with a concern more akin to Max McKinley's enthusiasm than to Josephine's cool and practical categorising. For a year or two he had worshipped Max McKinley and then had inexplicably cooled. But by then much of Peter's behaviour was inexplicable or heart-breaking.

After Peter had gone, Josephine continued to accommodate temporary Lost Boys. She did not put them to sleep in Peter's room, which she kept brushed and dusted and ready for his possible return. They slept, as the earlier Lost Boys had slept, in cosy attics where they could play music without disturbing Josephine's silence. She swept out such an attic for Henry Smee and put a bunch of flowers from her garden on the desk, to welcome him.

Max brought him and stayed to supper. They had supper in the kitchen, a warm room, gleaming with russet and scarlet and copper, heated by a Swedish steel solid-fuel heater which was fed with wooden logs and smelled of bonfires. It was not, nevertheless, an imitation farmhouse kitchen, but urban and domestic, its walls hung with used and useful tools, its wooden shelves cleanly supporting scarlet plates and bowls of nuts and fruit. Throughout this first meal Max and Josephine talked somewhat feverishly, addressing more than half their remarks to Henry Smee who said nothing, nothing at all, did not even clear his throat.

Josephine had in fact been shocked when she saw Henry Smee. He did—and equally did not—look like Simon Vowle. You could have used, Josephine could have used, the same little groups of words indifferently to describe either. He was excessively thin and pale, with lank, colourless hair, moon-glasses and a long fragile head on hunched shoulders, the sharp bones standing out on cheek and chin. The words would have fitted, had been written by Josephine, but the image did not. An artist playing with a pencil could have reproduced immediately the down-pull of the mouth-corner, the side-wind of the thin neck, drawn back, fastidious, nervous? An invented face never has this wholeness or quiddity. If you write "moon-glasses" those you inwardly "see", and the chin is vague and unfocused. So also with the precise degree of colourless colour in fine hairs. It came to Josephine that Max, whenever he thought of Simon Vowle, now saw *this* face, as she herself had to struggle, thinking of Philip Marlowe, not to see Humphrey Bogart. The fact that this irritated her was the first intimation of the problem.

Max went home, and left Josephine alone with Henry Smee, who said he would go to bed, and went up, soundlessly, clinging to the banisters for support.

Over the next weeks they breakfasted together, Josephine and Henry, and met again for supper, on days when Josephine was in. She tried to talk to him, in spite of a reluctance which was partly an aspect of her own reticent nature, and partly inspired by a kind of force-field which emanated from Henry's tense and paradoxically limp figure. She talked to him about the University, where he would go, and about fine points of translation into and out of Latin, Greek and French, about which, in his small non-resonant voice, he could be very sharp. He never offered to help prepare these two meals, nor to clear a plate, nor to dry one. He held his knife and fork as if they were both too heavy and too crude for his purposes.

He had a habit of stasis: if he got himself into a room he would then stand, every nerve, she could feel it, desperate to maintain his upright and immobile body. It was as though he was imprisoned in plate-glass, or fighting invisible streams of violent pressure. He had to be invited to move from door to chair, to sit, to stand, to bring his plate, which he held before him as a mechanical toy drummer holds his drum, on rigid arms between rigid fingers. Sometimes Josephine thought he was afraid of dropping her plates and sometimes that he felt it was not his place to have to touch them. He did not join in conversations she started in praise of the humanity of Max McKinley—he looked his look, which could be read as scornful or desperate, depending on her mood, rather than his. She had been told that he was musical: she urged him to make use of the piano and of Peter's record-player. He replied that the piano was out of tune and that the quality of sound on the record-player was distressing to his ear. She imagined him in some fine aural torment and wished he could have smiled, or looked self-deprecating as he spoke. She began to be afraid of him. She began to fear supper and to listen for his feet going up to his attic, and then to listen in fear for his door to open again, for him to begin his slow, deliberate, desperate-seeming descent.

THE SUBJECT OF Josephine's writings was fear. Rational fear, irrational fear, the huge-bulking fear of the young not at home in the world. Every writer, James says, discovers his or her subject-matter early and spends a lifetime elaborating and exploring it. That may or may not be generally true, but it was certainly true of Josephine Piper. Her characteristic form was the long novella: her characteristic hero a boy, anywhere between infancy and late adolescence, threatened and in retreat. Some of these boys were actually mutilated or killed, driven away in cars with no inner door-handles, rushed stumbling through urban jungles at knife-point, ritually tormented by gangs of other boys in public-school dormitory or State-school playground. If they were hurt it was always fast and unexpected: the subject was not violence but fear. Often they were not hurt: they suffered from a look, an exclusion, a crack in a window-pane, a swaggering bus-conductor keeping order on the top deck because he himself was afraid for his life. Josephine's work had been compared to Kafka as well

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as to Wilkie Collins and James himself. *The Boiler-Room* whose central figure was Simon Vowle, was a surreal story of a boy in a boarding-school who had built himself a Crusoe-like burrow or retreat in the dust behind the coiling pipe-system of the coke-boiler in the school basement and had finally moved in there completely, making forays for food and drink at night. It had a macabre end: Josephine Piper did not let her characters off. It had been described, with the usual hyperbole, as the last word on institutional terrors in schools. Josephine Piper could make an ordinary desk, a heap of football boots, a locked steel locker, tall and narrow, bristle with the horror of what man can do to man.

She recognised fear in Henry Smee, though she had no idea what he was afraid of, or whether his fears were real or phantasmagoric. She recognised something else too, from her own experience; the inconvenience, to the pathologically afraid, of an excessive gift of intellectual talent. Poor Henry could not but enjoy a grammatical dispute or the strict form of complex music: he perceived order and beauty, he remembered forms and patterns, he was doomed to think. He could not take up hiding as a life-style. She herself had been afraid as a child—where else could such knowledge have come from?—and had been so clever that it had had to be noticed; she could not hide it in silence and stammering, she had had to read and remember and in the end, as Henry was now doing, to go out at least temporarily into a world where these things mattered.

He developed an inconvenient habit. He would not speak, over breakfast or supper, and Josephine slowly ceased to persist in questionings and received monosyllabic or nodding answers. But he roamed the house at two, at three in the morning, in his pyjamas and dressing-gown, and once or twice she came down, fearing intruders, to find him sitting in the kitchen with a mug of Nescafé, staring at the stove. On these occasions, though he did not confide in Josephine, he showed an extraordinary willingness to talk. He would talk very quietly, so that she had to strain to hear him, offering, she imagined, the flotsam and jetsam of his thoughts, disconnected observations about the use of learning Latin quantities, or the economy of Stravinsky, or a longish disquisition on the Cambridge syllabus, with a parenthetical remark that he hoped that he didn't have to share supervisions, he found it hard to be in a room with more than one person at once. This was the most personal thing he said, and yet, yawning and low in blood-sugar, Josephine was aware that he was telling her as best he could what or how he was. The trouble was that she did not want to know. What she could face about what Henry was telling her she already knew. And fear is infectious.

Fear is perhaps also hereditary, Josephine's mother had had a mild and for others disagreeable case of agoraphobia, which had worsened as she grew older, with what Josephine's father, bewildered, socially embarrassed, lonely, called indulgence. When Josephine was five or six her overwrapped mother would take her overwrapped daughter as far as the local school and had been known to go as far as the Public Library. By the time Josephine was fourteen, at boarding school, Josephine's mother rarely ventured outside her bedroom, and became giddy even in the back garden. She had never said—Josephine had never supposed it would be worth asking—*what* she feared, and her daughter had been left to imagine. She remembered her mother veering in agitation out of a bus queue in which they had been standing side by side in uncompanionable silence, running up the road, dropping books and paper bags of plums and carrots.

What was frightening about bus-stops? It was more understandable that the doorbell should arouse terror. Josephine, who had had to negotiate the Kleen-e-ze man, the meter-readers, the doctor himself, saw all these as menacing. How much more menacing were the laughing large girls in the school dormitory, who threw pillows, who launched themselves on each other's beds, who ragged and mocked the thin child she was, shaking in her liberty bodice?

She had been saved, if she had been saved, by the solitary and sensuous pleasure of writing out her fear. Already in the boiler-room of St Clare's School she was writing clumsy tales of justified terror, of bounding packs of girls who accidentally squeezed the last breath out of their pathetic prey, of lost, voiceless sufferers locked in cupboards and accidentally forgotten. The boiler-room had been thick with coal-dust: scree of coke sloped up to a closed and cobwebbed window under the area and the pavement. If she opened the boiler door the flames hissed and roared and the coke-dust glittered here and there. She collected things: a blanket, a bicycle lamp, an old sweater, a biscuit tin, a special box for pens, a folder that lived there. She squeezed into her burrow, through pipe-gaps too narrow to take a larger girl or member of staff. Sometimes she sacrificed bad writing to the boiler, whose angry red turned briefly golden. When she wrote about Simon Vowle the coke-smell came back in its ancient fustiness and bitterness. Simon Vowle was an exorcism. The woman who could make and observe him was not doomed to relive her mother's curious arrested life, was she?

HENRY SMEE and Josephine sat in front of the kitchen stove, drinking powdered coffee. Henry was eating an apple, a Cox's Orange Pippin, which Josephine had given him. He looked as though the sound his teeth made, driving through the crackling apple-flesh, distressed or embarrassed him in the silence. He sat on a bench, his knees tight together, his thin ankles in his slippers whitely together. When he was not eating he held his hands together, pointing downwards, between his knees. Josephine wanted to be in bed. She, like Henry, suffered from insomnia, but

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she would rather have been reading. At three in the morning she fended off fear with long narrative poems, at once difficult verbally and offering another imagined world to enter. She asked Henry how his work was going at the Library and he replied that their classification system was crazy and made a lot of unnecessary work: they think books are just things of a certain size, said Henry.

And then he said, "I read *The Boiler Room*."

"Ah yes."

"Max told me to read it and I read it."

"Good."

"Simon Vowle", said Henry, and stopped. "Simon Vowle." It was a terrible effort for him. He was shaking. His coffee-cup shook and he had to put it down. Josephine, who might have taken pleasure in writing about the pain it was for him to make any direct communication, nevertheless made no effort to help him.

"How do you *know* about Simon Vowle? He—he does little—intimate things—plays little games with himself—*you* know, naturally, why am I telling you?—that I thought only I knew about. I thought only I—"

Josephine was more than reluctant to embark on this conversation. She answered, flippantly for her, "I know by observation. It's not uncommon. People grow out of it."

"Oh no", said Henry Smee. His glasses were steamed up. He took them off and turned to her a blind, seeking, vulnerable face. "The world is more terrible than most people ever let themselves imagine. Isn't it?"

She should have asked him, what are you afraid of? She was afraid of him. She said, wilfully. "Surely not at King Edmund's, with people like Max? I sent my Peter there because it was such a friendly place."

"It isn't—" He twisted his useless hands in his dressing-gown. "It isn't—friendly to everyone. It isn't possible. They are impossible people."

"I'm very fond of Max", said Josephine's respectable voice.

"I wasn't happy."

"You will grow out of it. We all have to."

"Oh no. You don't—understand. No—you do—you wrote— You won't understand."

"I get tired at three in the morning."

"Of course. I'll go to bed. Of course."

He rose jerkily and made off, a shuffle, a tentative stepping. Max had sent him to her for help. She had not helped. She put his apple core in the bin and wiped and wiped her softly-shining table-top.

After this, she became continuously afraid of Henry Smee. When she was working she listened for his quiet tread in her house, when she was cooking she waited for him to slide round the door and stand uselessly erect just inside it, waiting for something or nothing defined. She felt above all threatened by his reading of Simon Vowle. Simon Vowle was herself, was Josephine Piper: there was no room for another. Writers are commonly asked what reader they imagine. There are writers, believe it, and Josephine Piper was one of them, who can only function by imagining no reader. Simon was her own fear, circumscribed and set up independently. Henry's presence in her house, reading Simon and (terrible phrase, but here for once peculiarly apposite) "identifying with" Simon, was a blow at her own carefully created, carefully worked, independent identity. She developed, for the first time in her busy life, a writer's block. All the people she invented had Henry Smee's face, his nervous mannerisms, his soft scornful-frightened voice. Her freedom had gone, the freedom with which she had imaginatively looked out from inside the other skull of Simon Vowle, seeing the other boiler-room, the different coke-heap, smelling through his nostrils the fustiness and bitterness.

JOSEPHINE WAS HER OWN creation, as was separate Simon, as were the troop of other precursors and avatars of Simon. Josephine had made herself, with an effort of will, in opposition to her mother's fear, and what that might have made of her. She had said to herself, there *will* be a warm, friendly house, people *shall* come freely in and out, they will be made welcome among nice things. The warm and welcoming place, which now existed, was not, she knew, a true expression of herself. It was what she knew must be. What she was was the obsessive hider in the boiler-room dust. Her husband, Peter's father, after five years of living in the warm place, eating the good food, had left her for a sillier, more slapdash woman, who did little or nothing with her time, who laughed a lot. People had asked each other, and had even asked Josephine, how he could do this. Josephine did not ask herself. She knew. He had found her out. She did not mind the loss of him too much. A strain had gone, as well as a motive for living. She had had Peter still. She made a home for Peter.

Peter had been so cheerful. So outgoing. Even as a little boy he ran fearlessly up to people on buses or railway stations. He brought friends home, one after the other, and seemed in no doubt that they would go home well-fed and well-entertained. She had had her guard up: had never let him see or sense her fear. She had talked to Peter, only ever really to Peter. He had become so involved in the selection and entertainment of the Lost Boys. She had perhaps not noticed that he had other fears. He did not have the uncompromising intellect of Josephine and Henry Smee. Exams were hard for him: he struggled to become qualified and went off to do a course, carefully selected by him and Josephine as "human", in Communications at a polytechnic in a southern port. It was not until it had been going on for some months that Josephine learned that he was attending no classes, and then not from him. He spent all his time helping a group who brought soup to ragged sleepers in parks and subways, who

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helped squatters to break into empty council flats or bourgeois houses, who were not above taking what they saw as necessities from supermarkets.

Josephine went to see him once: he was living in a squat himself, long-bearded in layers of holed and smelly sweaters and cardigans. Josephine said "Why?" and Peter simply smiled pleasantly and told her he was happy enough. As though something was self-evident that to Josephine was not self-evident at all. He seemed unnaturally *easy*—easy-going, his body shambling and over-relaxed. Was this a new form of fear? Were the meths drinkers the logical culmination of the Lost Boys? Had he, later than his father, sensed that it was all made up, the warm firelight, the clean clothes, the open door, the smell of cooking? He smelled, her son, of old drains, of dirty wool, of damp ashes. Josephine blamed herself, but without her usual clarity about how and where precisely she had done wrong. Perhaps she had not done wrong. She simply was wrong.

HER BEDROOM WAS HERS in a way the rest of the house was not. It was a small cell. She had moved calmly out of the conjugal Master Bedroom to what had been a servant's small box, next to what might have been the Nursery, a place where a nurserymaid might have heard crying in the night and come. She had her old childhood bed, with cast-iron head and foot, a small chest with a mirror over it, a table with a reading-lamp, a peg rug on polished boards. She had not even a bookcase—books were brought in and out of this little place, but their soft colours brightened other walls.

One night, perhaps a week after Henry Smee had brought himself to try to speak of Simon Vowle, and had been discouraged, she came home from a dinner and listened fearfully at the foot of the stair, as the mini-cab drove away, for Henry Smee's inexorable tentative tread. The kitchen was dark and empty, the stove cold. She went up, sighed, closed herself into her small room and began to scream. He was doing nothing very fearful: simply studying his own face, sitting on the end of her bed, in her square of mirror, in the light given by the street lamp. As she came in, what she in fact saw was his reflected image staring at her out of the square of dark glass, lit up oddly by the light from the landing, through the door over her own shoulder. One of her drawers was slightly open, as though he might have been seeking out gloves or stockings, trying them on for fit, though this was entirely in her imagination, this trying-on, this appropriation. The only evidence was the open drawer, and she might have left that herself, in a hurry to leave. It was unlike her, particularly in here, but she might. His moon-face in the glass was distraught and glittering, eyeless because his glasses reflected reflection. His mouth was open in a great cry, but he made no sound. All the sound was her own screaming. He was white, and she thought again, he has taken my make-up: there was a faint smell of eau-de-Cologne and violets. But the white was surely his natural whiteness, the Simon-Vowle paleness she had used to such good effect, lit up by the sodium lighting in the street.

"Get out!" shrieked Josephine Piper, losing the self-control which, with the rhythm of her sentences, was what she most prized in herself. "Get out, get out of my house, I can't bear any more of this, I can't bear your creeping, get out of my house now this minute or anyway tomorrow."

He closed his mouth, then, and smiled a small circumscribed and satisfied little smile.

"Of course", he said. "Now this minute or tomorrow, of course I'll get out."

"It was shock", said Josephine as he edged round her. "Only shock."

"Don't mention it", said Henry Smee.

He went, the next day. She did not try to stop him. In a month or two Max McKinley rang to break it to her, which he did with circumspection and tact—that Henry Smee was dead, that he had swallowed a bottle of aspirin, just before he was due to take up his place at University. For a moment Josephine's imagination presented Henry Smee to her, as though there still was a Henry Smee, the pale creeping, the compressed mouth, the thin legs in drooping trousers, the outside of Henry Smee whose inside was unknown and unimagined. Whose inside she had refused to imagine. But Josephine could not go on, quite apart from feeling that it was indecent to go on, to imagine the making of the decision, the number of aspirins, the waiting. Her imagination tidied Henry Smee into a mnemonic, a barely-specified bed, a barely-specified bottle, a form with one outflung arm. She said to Max McKinley, "I didn't know, I never got a sense of what drove him, he was so closed-in, how terrible." And Max said "We failed him, we all failed him." And Josephine agreed.

But the writing block went. The next day she was able to start again with nothing and no one between her and the present Simon Vowle, a writer at work, making a separate world, with no inconvenient reader or importunate character in the house. The ghost of those limp yet skilful hands, just that, attached itself to the form of the present Simon (whose name was in fact James) but not so that anyone would have noticed.

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James Rusbridger

The Sinking of the "Automedon", the Capture of the "Nankin"

New Light on Two Intelligence Disasters in World War II

THE CELEBRATIONS last year and this—surrounding the 40th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy and the VE-Day victory eleven months later—produced many reminders of the various stratagems the Allies employed to deceive and confuse the enemy as to our intentions, and the associated Intelligence operations that were developed to eavesdrop upon the Germans' innermost deliberations. Due to an almost total absence of German archival material it has never been possible to establish beyond all doubt how many of these schemes worked as well as we like to believe they did, for in truth German Intelligence at operational levels—as opposed to that at command level—was of a very high order.

In the euphoria of victory and with the passage of time it is often forgotten that the Germans had their share of Intelligence coups too, just as dramatic and with equally far-reaching consequences as those the Allies perpetrated.[1]

Over the past ten years the release of archival material regarding the role during World War II of "Signals Intelligence" (SIGINT)—the art of eavesdropping upon the enemy's radio traffic—has provided some public access to the work of the ULTRA code-breaking organisation. This was, to give it its official title, the Government Code and Cipher School (the forerunner of today's Government Communications Headquarters), which was located at Bletchley Park, near London, and to a somewhat lesser extent the Signal Intelligence Service in Washington, D.C., its US counterpart. The flow of books and television documentaries based on this material have mainly concentrated on the penetration of German ciphers. As yet, no Japanese ULTRA intercepts have been released by the British Foreign Office into the Public Record Office at Kew, and the latest information suggests that there is little chance of this happening in the near future.

Because of the sensitive and controversial nature of Signals Intelligence and code-breaking, there is still much confusion—and a great deal of patriotic mythology—about exactly what was achieved during the last War, how it affected the outcome of individual battles, and—more importantly—what successes the enemy had with *their* Signals Intelligence and code-breaking activities against the Allies. Not surprisingly, because of their love of secrecy, the agencies involved have been only too happy to foster this confusion especially in cases where the reputation of a famous political leader or military hero is involved—e.g. Churchill or Field-Marshall Montgomery, whose apparent prescience during the War has become part of our history. The years pass, and those still alive who worked at Bletchley Park, and have first-hand experience of what went on there, dwindle in numbers and have been forbidden to publish their stories (or even to see their own wartime files, which are now kept at GCHQ at Cheltenham). An official history of Bletchley Park was written shortly after the War; but this has never been published, and there appear to be no plans to do so in the future.

Equally, there has been a surprising lack of definitive accounts from German sources detailing their wartime Signals Intelligence and code-breaking operations. Initially, this was due to the unavailability of the relevant records because, at the end of the War, all these were removed, either to London or Washington, for inspection by the Allies. It is clear that when these archives were repatriated to Bonn in 1958 quite a number of files were retained under the Anglo-American agreement, arranged immediately after the War, that there was to be no public release of any wartime material dealing with code-breaking, "double-agents", or any of the variety of deception schemes (and other ruses) that had been employed against the enemy.

Furthermore, it was not long after the War's end that the political tide began to change and the US Central Intelligence Agency started recruiting German Intelligence personnel (with scant consideration for their wartime activities or

[1] See, on the European front, the articles in ENCOUNTER by the Dutch historian Louis de Jong: "Was 'Arnhem' Betrayed?" (June 1981), and "The 'Great Game' of Secret Agents" (January 1980); and Robert Cecil, "Legends Spies Tell" (April 1978).

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behaviour) in order to prepare for the new Intelligence duel with the Soviet Union. Not surprisingly, it was considered inadvisable to encourage our past enemies to publish details of their wartime successes against the Allies. These might have a direct bearing on current operations not only against the USSR and her allies, but also against other nations which were still using variations of the *Enigma* cipher machine.

All the available evidence does confirm, however, that in the years leading up to the outbreak of World War II in 1939 the Germans had developed an extremely efficient Signals Intelligence organisation (usually known as *B-Dienst*), which was regularly reading British diplomatic, Naval, Army, Air Force, and Merchant Navy ciphers with ease. The cause of this was the British Government's reluctance to adopt the principle of "machine enciphering." During the 1920s, this had been progressively developed by three principal inventors: Boris Hagelin and Arthur Scherbius on the Continent, and Edward Hebern in the United States.[2]

In the mid-1930s, the late Lord Louis Mountbatten had strongly recommended that the Royal Navy adopt machine enciphering, using the *Enigma*, of which two had been bought by the Admiralty in 1928. Unfortunately, no action was taken. When the War started the Navy was still using the cumbersome and outdated "book ciphers" which had hardly changed since World War I. These tabular columns of four- and five-figure groups, employed in conjunction with subtractor tables, were time-consuming in use, and prone to arithmetical error. In addition, the system suffered from a primary disadvantage: if any one set of code books was captured, new sets had to be issued to all the ships in that particular group—and in wartime that could be a very lengthy procedure.

By contrast, the *Enigma* consisted of a machine about the size of a portable typewriter, with a standard keyboard, three (later, four) interchangeable rotors, and a number of plug connectors. Together it offered 200 quintillion permutations, and yet it could be used without difficulty by semi-skilled operators under the most extreme battle conditions. The rotor settings could be changed daily (or several times a day) according to the number of messages transmitted; each setting produced 17,576 different positions, after which the rotors returned to their original setting.

Apart from radio interception and code-breaking, Hitler's Intelligence Services had also captured large quantities of secret cipher material from the various British Embassies and Consulates in Scandinavia during April-May 1940. A complete set of current Naval ciphers was seized from the submarine *HMS Seal*, captured off the German coast in 1940. There is still some mystery surrounding this incident, because nearly an hour passed between the submarine being forced to the surface and surrendering, yet no attempt was made to throw the ciphers overboard. On 11 September 1942, a motor torpedo boat was captured by the Germans which again yielded valuable cipher material. Similar secret Naval documents were found in Royal Naval vessels lost off Crete.

German Intelligence was also adept at exploiting specific coups. For example, in August 1941 an Italian employee at the US Embassy in Rome picked the lock of the safe used by the Military Attaché, Colonel Fiske, and photographed his cipher (sometimes called the "Black Code"), which was then passed on to the Germans. For the next 18 months or so, they were able to read all American military attaché traffic around the world.

In particular, the "Black Code" enabled Field-Marshal Rommel to monitor the daily reports from Colonel Frank Fellers, the US Military Attaché in Cairo, who sent back to Washington detailed summaries of the military and diplomatic plans of the British Middle East operations. Churchill was anxious that President Roosevelt should be apprised of what was happening in the Middle East, and Colonel Fellers was invited to attend all the most secret briefings. For a long time Rommel was credited with possessing almost magical powers in anticipating our next move in the Desert War—although, in fact, he was doing no more than we were with our Ultra intercepts of German signals.

One result of this precious insight into our intentions was that the Germans learnt of the appointment of General William ("Strafer") Gott as Commander of the 8th Army, and of his plan to fly to Cairo on 7 August 1942 to take up his appointment. Gott's Bristol Bombay transport aircraft took off from a small airstrip at Burg-el-Arab and was immediately attacked by six Messerschmitt *109f* fighters which had been lying in wait.[3]

The "Automedon" Windfall

One particular theatre of operations where the Germans enjoyed spectacular success was in the Indian Ocean where their surface raiders intercepted, sank, or captured a vast tonnage of Allied merchant shipping. German accounts of these operations[4] appeared soon after the War but concentrated on the buccaneering aspect of the raiders' exploits: and the full extent to which they used Signals Intelligence and crypt-analysis has come to light only recently.

One of their early successes was the capture by the raider *Atlantis* (on 11 July 1940) of the steamer *City of Baghdad*, from which was taken current copies of the Merchant Navy

[2] Of these three, Arthur Scherbius is the best remembered because he produced the *Enigma* cipher machine. Boris Hagelin eventually supplied cipher machines to the US Armed Forces and in the process became a millionaire (he set up his own cipher-machine factory in Switzerland after the War, and today it leads the world in cryptographic technology).

[3] The pilot of the plane, Hugh ("Jimmy") James, managed to crash-land in flames, whereupon the German fighters, circling overhead, dived in attack time and again. General Gott survived the landing, but was killed during these attacks (see *Daily Telegraph*, London, 8 and 12 June 1984).

Less than a year later, in April 1943, American code-breakers intercepted a message detailing the proposed inspection tour by Admiral Yamamoto of the Solomon Islands; fighters from Henderson Field attacked his aircraft and shot it down, causing a terrible blow to Japanese morale at the loss of their great hero.

[4] Bernhard Rogge and Wolfgang Frank, *Schiff 16* (Stalling Verlag, Hamburg, 1955); Ulrich Mohr, *Atlantis* (London, 1955).

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cipher and secret call-signs that enabled the captain of the *Atlantis*, Bernhard Rogge, to read messages for other Allied merchant shipping, plot their likely course, and intercept them without difficulty. On several occasions prisoners were told by the Germans the name of the vessel they would intercept the next day, and each time this proved correct.[5] The raiders were practised at sending out false messages which cancelled the distress calls of those ships they had captured.

On 10 September 1940, using this technique, the *Benarty* was secured and more secret mail seized; then, on 11 November, the Blue Funnel steamer *Automedon* (7,528 tons) was intercepted by the *Atlantis* off the Nicobar Islands. In order to stop her using her radio to send a "Raider Sighted" report, the *Atlantis* shelled her with 28 rounds from her 5.9 inch guns (wrecking the vessel and killing Captain McEwen and two officers and a steward on the bridge).

The German boarding party was led by Lieutenant Ulrich Mohr, who had an excellent knowledge of English. Forcing open the strong-room they seized some 60 packages of mail including all the top-secret post *en route* for Far Eastern Command, Singapore. Among their haul were the new Royal Navy fleet ciphers; new Merchant Navy ciphers valid from 1 January 1941; Admiralty weekly shipping intelligence summaries; and a host of other sensitive documents. There was also six million dollars of new Straits currency notes, fresh from the Treasury printers in England.

THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM, packed in its own weighted canvas bag marked "SAFE HAND—BRITISH MASTER ONLY", was a copy of the War Cabinet Minutes for 8 August 1940, which included the highly secret Chiefs-of-Staff report on the defence of Singapore and the Far East against Japanese attack, which was being sent to Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, C.-in-C. Far East.[6]

This document consisted of 87 detailed paragraphs, and was most gloomy in tone. It flatly stated that Britain was not in a position to resort to war if Japan attacked French Indo-China or Siam, and that Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore, and the Dutch East Indies were indefensible since we would be unable to spare sufficient forces from other theatres of war to match the Japanese. It seems incredible that such a valuable document should have been sent to the Far East on a slow, vulnerable, merchant ship when the flying-boat service to Singapore was still in operation. Lieutenant Mohr immediately recognised its importance when he and captain Rogge inspected their haul.

Having sunk the *Automedon*, the *Atlantis* immediately sailed for the Mandated Islands where the Japanese had been providing a safe harbour and refuelling facilities for German raiders. The mail and prisoners were transferred to the captured Norwegian tanker *Ole Jacob* which at once sailed for Japan carrying 10,000 tons of aviation gasoline. When it reached Kobe, on 4 December, the prisoners were taken off at night—to avoid them being detected by the British Secret Service who had the movements of German vessels under surveillance—and transferred to the liner *Scharnhorst*.

THE MAIL FROM THE *Automedon* reached the German Embassy in Tokyo on 5 December and was immediately inspected by Admiral Paul Wenneker, the German Naval Attaché. He photographed the most important items, including the Chiefs-of-Staff report, before sending them off to Berlin in the custody of a German Naval officer, Paul Kamenz, who crossed to Vladivostok and then travelled on across Russia, via Moscow, by train.

On 7 December Admiral Wenneker sent a long four-part cipher telegram to OKM Berlin (*Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine*), the German Navy headquarters, summarising the main parts of the Chiefs-of-Staff report. Because this message went by postal telegraph circuit across the Soviet Union it could not be intercepted by the British code-breakers at Bletchley Park. On 12 December the Japanese Naval Attaché in Berlin, Captain Yokoi, on the express orders of Hitler, was shown a copy of Wenneker's summary. Yokoi then sent his own shortened version back to Tokyo—and this message was intercepted by the Americans. . . .[7] However, because it was in the Naval Attaché's cipher, it could not be read (the signal was not decoded until after the War, on 19 August 1945).

On 12 December Admiral Wenneker gave copies of the Chiefs-of-Staff report to Vice-Admiral Kondo (then Vice-Chairman of the Japanese Naval General Staff). At first he could not believe that the documents were genuine, suspecting that they had been deliberately allowed to fall into enemy hands in order to mislead both the Germans and the Japanese. However, when Wenneker explained how they had come to be captured, and the loss of life involved, Kondo accepted the authenticity of this almost incredible windfall.

There is no doubt that possession of these documents profoundly affected Japanese war planning in January 1941. This intimate view of Churchill's War Cabinet decisions and opinions enabled the Japanese to dismiss any serious fears that the British could make a worthwhile military intervention in the Far East. It also provided the Japanese with a clear picture of British knowledge of their armed forces (for example, that we were unaware that the Japanese Air Force possessed torpedo-carrying aircraft).

It is fair to argue, therefore, that the capture of the Chiefs-of-Staff report from the *Automedon* was the catalyst that sent the Japanese on the path to Pearl Harbour and precipitated the ruinous attack on America's Pacific fleet.

After the fall of Singapore in 1941, Captain Rogge of the *Atlantis* was presented with a *samurai* sword by the Japanese Emperor in recognition of his achievement. Only two other

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[5] File I/61/2/7 and MPI/587/22/153S, Australian Archives, Canberra.

[6] CAB/65/8, Public Record Office (Kew). COS (40) 592, 31 July 1940, now CAB 66/10, Public Record Office. Letter from Squadron Leader G. H. Wiles (Air Ministry, London, dated 15 July 1948) to Air Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham.

[7] 209/40-212/40 gKdos, *Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine* (*OKM*) signal log, and SRNA 0020, RG 457 (National Archives, Washington, D.C.).

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Germans received such an award—Hermann Goering and Erwin Rommel. Later, Admiral Kondo was to tell Wenneker on several occasions how valuable this particular document had been in planning the attacks on Pearl Harbour, the Philippines, and Singapore, on 8 December 1941, thus opening the war between Imperial Japan and the USA.

Despite the heavy shelling the *Automedon* had managed to send out a "Raider" report which, although incomplete, was intercepted by at least two ships, the *Matara* and the *Helenus*. On 30 December 1940, British Naval Intelligence in Singapore learned from a member of the Norwegian crew of the *Ole Jacob* that the Germans had seized all the mail on board the *Automedon*, and advised the Admiralty in London accordingly.[8]

The surviving members of the crew of the *Automedon* were brought back to Europe in the German blockade-runner *Storstad*, arriving at Bordeaux on 5 February 1941. After being held in a PoW camp for a month, they were taken (on March 12) to the railway station for transfer to another PoW camp near Munich.[9]

AT THE END OF THE WAR the British Government considered the *Automedon* affair so sensitive, bearing in mind the effect it had had on the outcome in the Far East, including the fall of Singapore—that all reference to it was to be withheld from the public. As a result, no files about the incident are to be found in the Public Record Office at Kew.[10]

Public knowledge of the loss of the Cabinet documents came to light quite accidentally when, in 1980, the US National Security Agency declassified over 130,000 pages of wartime MAGIC decrypts, (the word MAGIC being equivalent to the British ULTRA). Among these was the intercepted message from Captain Yokoi and, when this first publicly appeared in 1981,[11] it became possible to trace the lost papers back to the *Automedon*.

Even today, after nearly 45 years, the incident is evidently considered so embarrassing that the Foreign Office will not admit that the loss ever occurred, despite the fact that the captured documents were found in the German Foreign Ministry archives in Berlin in 1945. In 1983 I asked the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, to inquire into the matter. After a delay of seven months, the Foreign Office advised me that it would be "improper" for me to know the facts of the incident, but hinted that the documents had perhaps been passed to the Russians, and thence to the Germans, by the exposed Soviet spy Donald Maclean.[12] Lord Dacre, who as Hugh Trevor-Roper was responsible for sifting through many German archives after the War, expressed the view that any suggestion that secret War Cabinet Minutes had been lost to the enemy in 1940 was "highly questionable" and that no such papers had been found among the German records.[13]

Although by the end of 1940 Churchill and his War Cabinet were aware that their most secret plans for the defence of Malaya and Singapore had fallen into enemy hands, neither the C.-in-C. Far East, Brooke-Popham, nor the Governor of Singapore, Sir Shenton Thomas, were told of the loss.[14] This is particularly surprising because on 1 August 1940, while on leave in London, Sir Shenton Thomas had put his case for the defence of Singapore and Malaya personally to the Joint Planning Sub-Committee of the War Cabinet and many of his recommendations were incorporated in the ill-fated report. After the War Sir Shenton was very critical of the manner in which the official account of the loss of British possessions east of India was prepared. Indeed, he was not even consulted before the official history of the war against Japan was written—although he had come in for a considerable amount of criticism for the ease with which Singapore fell to the enemy. Had Sir Shenton (or his C.-in-C., who died in 1953) known that our entire defence plans had been in enemy hands for a year prior to hostilities commencing, he would surely have made some pertinent comment before his untimely death in 1962. One can only deduce that, for one reason or another, Winston Churchill had decided not to tell the authorities in Singapore.

IT ALSO APPEARS THAT neither the Australian nor the New Zealand Governments were told of this catastrophe—despite the fact that the British Chiefs-of-Staff report had been specifically prepared to satisfy their queries about Britain's intentions concerning the defence of the Far East in the event of a Japanese attack. In 1941 the Chiefs of Staff prepared another report on the defence of Singapore and Malaya, again in reply to a query from Prime Minister Robert Menzies of Australia. But this does not mention the loss of the previous report, nor is there any comment about this in the Minutes of the Defence Committee for 9 April 1941,

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[8] Stephen Wentworth Roskill, *The War at Sea 1939-45: Vol. I, The Defensive* (HMSO, London), p.282. Common Services Records (London), and Modern Records Centre (Liverpool), 20 September 1984.

[9] While travelling across France, the *Automedon*'s Fourth Engineer, Samuel Harper, jumped from the train during the night and started to make his way across France to freedom. By a series of fortunate coincidences he met with friendly and helpful Frenchmen who passed him on from one town to another until on 18 March he finally reached Marseilles. On 9 April he was taken by a party of smugglers across the Pyrenees, eventually reaching Spain on 13 April; he was promptly arrested and taken to a prison in Barcelona. The British Embassy secured his release on 29 May and, after being taken to Madrid for a medical check-up, Harper finally reached Gibraltar on 31 May 1941. (Modern Records Centre, Blue Funnel Line Archives, Liverpool.)

[10] Search Department, Public Record Office (4 September 1984), Q/7821.

[11] John Costello, *The Pacific War* (Collins, 1981), p.614.

[12] Historical Section, Cabinet Office (London), 23 August 1984. Letter from Squadron Leader G. H. Wiles, 15 July 1948. Permanent Under Secretary's Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (London), 2 February 1984.

[13] Letter from Lord Dacre to Mac Keen, Assistant Managing Editor, *Daily Mail*, London, January 1984.

[14] Private correspondence (August 1984) with Colonel Brian Montgomery, author of *Shenton of Singapore* (Secker & Warburg, 1984), and Hugh Humphrey, CMG, OBE, who in 1940 was Sir Shenton's private secretary.

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when the defence of the Far East was also discussed in detail.[15]

The "Nankin" & the Compromised Cipher

ALTHOUGH THE *Automedon* affair was disastrous, it pales into insignificance compared to what happened when the Australian steamer *Nankin* was captured by the German raider *Thor* on 10 May 1942.

The *Nankin* had sailed from Fremantle on 5 May under the command of Captain Stratford with a crew of 180, 162 passengers (including 38 women and children), and 18 naval and 5 military personnel. Once again it is clearly evident that the German raider had advance information of the *Nankin*'s movements.

In the early afternoon, an aircraft circled the ship (and then made a very low pass in an attempt to tear away the wireless aerial). Shortly afterwards the *Thor* was seen approaching, and when the *Nankin* broke radio silence and attempted to transmit a "Raider Sighted" signal, she opened fire. After an hour-long engagement during which there were fortunately only light casualties, Captain Stratford decided to surrender—but not before throwing overboard the ship's code-books and confidential papers.[16] The *Thor* was then joined by her supply vessel, the *Regensburg*, and the three vessels remained together from 12 May to 28 May while the passengers, the crew, and the *Nankin*'s valuable and useful cargo were transferred to the two German ships. (This clearly demonstrates how good the Germans' Signals Intelligence had become, for they evidently felt it quite safe to remain together for a long period.)

Among the *Nankin*'s cargo the Germans found a large quantity of mail. There is some dispute as to how much there was; one report mentions 400 sacks of ordinary mail and 56 sacks of secret courier post, while another report (which seems the more likely), speaks of only 120 sacks.[17] The bulk of the mail was quite routine material, mainly consisting of letters and packets from South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia, destined for England; but there was also a small amount of very secret mail from the Combined Operations Intelligence Centre at Wellington, New Zealand, *en route* to C.-in-C. Eastern Fleet (Colombo).

COIC (sometimes known as the Central Intelligence Bureau) was first established in 1940 in an office next door to New Zealand's central War room in Stout Street, Wellington. It was an offshoot of the Prime Minister's group called the "Organisation for National Security", which began work in 1938 keeping records on Japanese (and other aliens) in New Zealand. COIC coordinated the Intelligence activities of New Zealand's Army, Navy, and Air Force, and had close links with the Police and Customs Service; it also worked closely with the British, American, and Australian Intelligence Services from which it received a great deal of very sensitive information, much of which dealt with matters far outside the Australasian theatre of operations.

Each week COIC issued a "MOST SECRET" intelligence summary[18] which was distributed on an "Officer Only" basis to 22 named recipients, including the C.-in-C. US Pacific Fleet, Admiral Chester Nimitz. A further warning inside each summary stated that the contents came from *"Most Secret Sources"*, an expression coined by Churchill to denote that the information was of ULTRA classification and had been obtained from cryptanalysis.

Each summary was divided into four parts. The first, dealing with information about the ANZAC theatre of operations, gave details of Allied shipping, naval vessels, convoys, and so forth. The second part concerned external intelligence and appears to have covered any part of the world (it included, for example, weekly convoy tonnages arriving in the United Kingdom—which seems a strange piece of information to send all the way out to New Zealand). Part Three provided information on Japanese forces and general comments about Japan's economy, while Part Four gave a detailed list of the estimated disposition of Japanese naval vessels in the Indian and Pacific Oceans and their likely future movements. A separate appendix then gave the latest details of every Allied vessel in the same area and their future movements.

SOME OF THE INFORMATION in these summaries came from normal sources such as air reconnaissance; interrogation of prisoners; the coast-watcher service, which involved agents living behind Japanese lines and radioing reports to the Intelligence Services; and analysis of regular radio traffic passing between ships at sea and their land bases. But it was equally obvious that much of the very detailed knowledge of the whereabouts of enemy ships and their intended movements could only have come from code-breaking; and it seems, therefore, that the COIC was receiving a great deal of information from the US Navy's cryptanalysis organisation in Hawaii.

This was known as the Fleet Radio Unit (FRUPAC), which had a subsidiary headquarters at Belconnen, in Australia. These two teams of cryptographers had been intercepting, analysing, and slowly penetrating the most complex Japanese operational cipher, which the US Navy called *JN25*. It is outside the scope of this article for me to attempt to describe in detail the principle of the *JN25* fleet cipher, but it involved an elaborate system of double-encipherment using a number of different tables of figure-groups each of which was regularly changed. Although it was not a machine cipher like *Enigma*, or that used by the Japanese for their diplomatic communications, it was still considered impossible to break.

The Americans naturally guarded the secret of their code-breaking activities very carefully; and it is not yet clear

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[15] Secretary of War Cabinet, 5 August 1940, WP (40) 302, now CAB 66/10 at Public Record Office. COS 230/41. Defence Committee (Operations) 12/41, now CAB 69/2, PRO.

[16] Australian Naval Archives, 2026/10/1854, MPI/1185/8, Box 21.

[17] Paul Carell, "Gespenster auf Hoher See", *Kristall Magazine* (Hamburg), Vol. 13, 1958. Foreign Ministry files, Berlin, Pol VIII, 1064/42, now at *Bundesarchiv*, Freiburg.

[18] New Zealand Archives (Wellington), Navy Series List, Series 11.

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whether FRUPac was aware of how much information was being passed to COIC, or to what extent COIC was redistributing it. The late Admiral Layton USN (he died in May 1984) was Nimitz's Fleet Radio Officer in charge of all Intelligence matters and in close touch with the code-breakers at FRUPac; and he has stated that there was always great concern within the US Navy that such vital information was being passed to organisations outside their control.[19] Additionally, there was the constant problem of the US press which was subject to far less severe censorship than the British press and often published articles that came dangerously near to revealing the truth of such matters.

Because of the sensitive nature of the COIC summaries it would have been normal procedure, as laid down by the New Zealand Organisation for National Security, for them to be distributed by hand, using a courier, as with similar material from Bletchley Park. One of the great problems about putting the ULTRA material to use was how to impart its information without compromising the source. Frequently a cover story would be invented to pretend that it had come from a spy.

According to a surviving officer from the *Nankin*,[20] no such courier mail was handed to Captain Stratford. It seems, therefore, that the COIC summaries had been inadvertently included with the general mail—which, considering the large number of vessels captured by German raiders in the previous two years, was an appalling breach of elementary security.

It has been possible to establish from two of Admiral Wenneker's telegrams to Berlin that COIC summaries 12, 13, 14, and 15 (covering the period 21 March to 20 April 1942) were on board the *Nankin* and were captured. These particular reports were of crucial importance. They clearly showed the increasing extent of the US Navy's knowledge of the Japanese battle fleet's movements in the weeks leading up to the Battle of Midway (3-5 June), and this could only have come from reading the *JN25* fleet-cipher.

UNLIKE THE *Automedon* incident, on this occasion the Germans fortunately took much longer to get the mail to Japan. The *Regensburg* first called at Batavia, on 25 June, and only reached Yokohama on 18 July. Wenneker immediately examined the mail; on 20 July he began relaying to *OKM* Berlin summaries of what he had found in the mail, and on 25 July and 28 July[21] sent details of some of the COIC summaries. However, it was not until late August that Berlin authorised Admiral Wenneker to show the COIC reports to the Japanese. On 29 August he had his first meeting with them, and for the first time the Japanese became aware of the extent to which the Americans were reading their fleet ciphers and that this had obviously been responsible for their severe defeat at the Battle of Midway. Nevertheless, despite the evidence from the *Nankin*, senior Japanese Naval commanders were very reluctant to believe their most important cipher had in fact been compromised.

The *Seekriegsleitung*, the war diary kept at German Naval Headquarters in Berlin, refers to this meeting (3 September 1942) and records that the Allied knowledge of the Japanese fleet dispositions showed that their communications were insecure, and the Japanese requested the assistance of the German Navy in improving their cipher security. As a result a communications agreement was prepared between the two Navies (11 September 1942), and subsequently 500 *Enigma* cipher-machines were sent to Japan from Germany in 1943. German cooperation with the Japanese in the field of cryptology had always been cautious because, in late 1940, they had learnt that the Americans were reading Japanese machine diplomatic ciphers—although, ironically, it never occurred to them that their own *Enigma* system might also be vulnerable.[22]

There was ample evidence available that *Enigma* had been penetrated by the British, but, as so often in such matters, Hitler's senior commanders refused to believe it and junior German Intelligence officers soon realised that it was pointless to try to convince them. In 1943, Colonel Masson of the Swiss Secret Service had told German Intelligence[23] about an American contact working in the Navy Department in Washington, who had several times visited London with US Navy missions. He had reported that the British Navy had a special department (actually the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre) which since the outbreak of war had concerned itself exclusively with the decipherment of German naval codes—and, for some months past, had succeeded in reading all orders sent by the German Navy to U-boat commanders. Despite this startlingly accurate piece of information, the Germans continued to use *Enigma*, albeit with a few extra refinements, and refused to believe that the codes had been broken. . . .

As a result of the disclosures from the captured Combined Operations Intelligence Centre summaries, the Japanese Navy immediately introduced strict new security arrangements to protect the *JN25* fleet cipher. It also drastically reduced the volume of radio traffic, and made significant changes to the call signs. The two code books used for *JN25* were due to be replaced on 1 April 1942, as part of routine procedure. Due to logistical problems in circulating the new tables to every ship and shore station, however, the change had to be postponed twice, and the fleet did not switch over to the new cipher until 28 May.[24] Between then and August the US Navy's code-breakers began the laborious task of reconstructing the new cipher tables. But immediately after Admiral Wenneker's meeting with the Japanese on 29 August they experienced a sudden signals blackout, so total that until well into 1943 the US Navy was unable to obtain any useful information.

This loss of signals intelligence seriously affected the outcome of at least three major naval engagements in the

[19] Various conversations with John Costello (New York) during 1983 and 1984.
[20] Captain B. W. Dun (Ret'd) (Hawthorn, Australia), 19 June 1984.
[21] 1417/42 and 1435/42 gKdos (National Archives, Washington, D.C.).
[22] Imperial War Museum (London) and Public Record Office (Kew), ADM 223/51 Part I.
[23] OKW/Abwehr 1 M/TB 1663/43 gKdos (18 August 1943), *Bundesarchiv* (Freiburg).
[24] John Costello, *The Pacific War*, pp. 246-49.

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Pacific: the battle of Cape Esperance (11-12 October); Santa Cruz (26 October); and Guadalcanal (13-15 November)—all of which resulted in unexpectedly severe losses for the US Navy.

The Americans were never told about the loss of COIC material on the *Nankin* and how this compromised their code-breaking achievements at one of the most important moments of the war against Japan. To this day there is no mention of the *Nankin* affair in any American archive—for the simple reason that the British and Australian authorities have taken great trouble to conceal the facts.

In 1945 the captured COIC summaries surfaced among the German naval archives (exactly where they were found is not clear, but it may have been at Schloss Tambach). By the time the German records were repatriated to Bonn in 1958, all reference to the *Nankin* affair had been removed. The log of the raider *Thor* (which is now in the *Bundesarchiv* at Freiburg) appears to have been retyped since the War.[25] The entry concerning the *Nankin*'s capture makes no reference to any mail having been found on board; yet, a week earlier, the entry for the capture of the Norwegian tanker *Aust* precisely details the mail and other documents taken from her.

THE MOST CURIOUS ASPECT, indeed the greatest mystery, of the whole affair is the missing portion of Admiral Wenneker's war diary for the period 1 June through 31 October 1942. This just happens to include the period when the *Nankin*'s mail reached Japan, and Wenneker had his series of meetings with the Japanese Naval Command. According to the Naval Historical Branch in London, this section was lost in transit between Tokyo and Berlin—although the rest of his diary (from 25 August 1939 through 31 March 1943) is intact and available.[26] The absence of this section of his diary makes it impossible to know what else Wenneker found among the *Nankin*'s mail, what he told Berlin about it, and what was discussed at his meetings with the Japanese. From checking the serial numbers of Wenneker's telegrams one can deduce that between 20-28 July 1942 he sent 52 messages to Berlin, most of which were probably about the *Nankin*'s mail. The incoming-signal log at German Naval Headquarters in Berlin (in which all Wenneker's messages would have been recorded) has also vanished.

Wenneker's signals to and from Berlin after Hitler's invasion of Russia in June 1941 went by direct-beam radio, and were intercepted by the British code-breakers at Bletchley Park; they called this material *Seahorse*. Wenneker's special *Enigma* key (it is possible he was using an 8-rotor machine vastly more complex than the normal 4-rotor machines) was not broken by Bletchley Park until late 1943. At the end of the War, his earlier traffic would have been retrospectively decoded (as the Americans did, for example, with the Japanese Naval Attaché's signals from Berlin). Today, Wenneker's messages are kept in the "Japanese ULTRA Intercept" archives, under the control of the Foreign Office, which will not release them to the Public Record Office. When I was carrying out research for this article, I asked the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, if I could see the 50 or 60 messages sent to Berlin by Admiral Wenneker in July/August 1942; I was not only refused access but also informed that none of this traffic would ever be available for public inspection. It is just possible that the US National Security Agency may hold copies of Wenneker's signals among its as yet unreleased archives, without realising that they contain the information that proved so disastrous for the US Navy in 1942.

HAD DETAILS of the COIC mail from the *Nankin* reached Japan more quickly there is no doubt that the outcome of the Battle of Midway would have been very different. All historians agree that the American victory turned the tide of the Pacific war and set the United States on the road to ultimate victory. The decisive victory very largely resulted from the US Navy's ability to read the Japanese Navy's ciphers and thus anticipate their intentions. As it was, the loss of this material seriously reduced the US Navy's fighting ability for many months at a most crucial point in the War, and caused unnecessarily severe American losses in several subsequent naval battles.

Just as the proverbial battle can be lost by "want of a nail" in the horse's shoe, so too the events of the *Automedon* and the *Nankin* illustrate that the most complex cipher system in the world, taken to be infallible or unbreakable, can be compromised by an accident, a far-away setback, or a single moment of carelessness.

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[25] I am grateful to Dr John Chapman, University of Sussex, for information supplied. I would also like to thank John Costello (New York), Philip Reed (The Imperial War Museum), Ian Brown (Combined Services Records), Michael Montgomery, the late Ronald Lewin, M. McAloon and R. M. Coppock (Naval Historical Branch, Ministry of Defence), and Ellen Ellis (New Zealand National Archives) for their valuable comments and assistance in preparing this article. I am greatly indebted to Dr Henry Kent for his expert translation of many of the German documents involved.

[26] Paul Wenneker's diary, under the title *The Price of Admiralty*, has been edited and translated by John W. M. Chapman (Saltire Press, 1984).

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Daniel Bell

Gutenberg & the Computer

On Information, Knowledge & other Distinctions

WHY defend the book? If it were only for antiquarian or sentimental reasons, there would be little rationale for the effort. We do so because the book—yes, as a format—is constitutive of culture; and without culture we live only the animal, the ignorant, or the utilitarian life. As a sociologist, I begin with distinctions and categories in order to see what is at stake. There are five aspects of the book—I am being arbitrary, yet I hope to justify the number—which concern us:

The first is the book as a utilitarian device, a means of organising information in a convenient way.

The second is the book as a mode of learning, of gaining knowledge. Note that I distinguish between information and knowledge. This is a theme I shall return to as one of the axes of my argument.

The third is the book as text for entertainment, pleasure, and imagination. Here the focus is on language: the sounds and colours of language; the rhythms and sinuosity of language; the tropes and figurative modes which, by juxtaposition of terms, prompt the imagination to soar and to engage us actively as readers. The earliest words we may recall from childhood are: Tell me a story; and read me a book.

The fourth is the book as an aesthetic object itself, the pleasures of craft: the type, the layout of the page, the illustrations, the binding, all of which exemplify the art of the designer and the care of the craftsman.

And the fifth is the book as a "collectible", satisfying the hoarding impulse, the status desire, or the simple childish urge to collect objects that are "mine."

Some of these follies and fears can be quickly disposed of. In an air travel magazine—where else?—I read recently some advice about the extraordinary financial gains to be realised by collecting books. The head of a firm of book appraisers is quoted as advising the novice:

> . . . if you want a little fun, collect first editions of modern authors who you think will be recognised by posterity. Try to get the books signed by the author, a possibility not so remote now that publicity tours are arranged by publishers. An inscription or message increases the value.
>
> If, God forbid, you choose to read it, first remove the dust jacket; in part to keep that in good condition—it adds appreciably to the value of the book—and in part, because the shiny dust jacket takes up finger prints; the cloth jacket doesn't. Then put it away."

As a collectible, we can leave the book to the follies of the market.[1]

On the other hand, I think of a story about Gershom Scholem, the great authority on Jewish mysticism and himself a Master of the Book. Browsing one day in a bookstore in Jerusalem, Scholem found an extraordinary rare volume on the Lurianic *kabbalah*, a topic quite troublesome to many of the Orthodox. He asked the bookseller the price and was given an astonishingly low figure. Ashamed at the thought that he might be taking advantage of the man, Scholem said: "Do you realise what this book is—how rare it is?" The bookseller looked at the book and shrugged: "Some books are worth reading; some are not. The price is the same." (It is only in second-hand bookstores that the principle of use-value, rather than exchange-value, sometimes applies.) We can leave rarity, subject to the follies of the market, modified, at times, by the good taste of the old-fashioned bookseller.

WHEN A BOOK is regarded as a work of art, rather than a utilitarian format, the tension between craft and mechanisation becomes an aesthetic issue. When Ruskin spoke of "vile manufacture" he contrasted all manufacture to honourable craftsmanship, in which the artist controlled his work by his own hand, whereas in manufacture the production is surrendered to an automation that mimics and therefore falsifies the work of the hand.[2]

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[1] The cognoscenti know, of course, that as collectibles, first editions have now given way to the bound page galleys of advance reading copies, especially if they have authors' corrections xeroxed on the pages; and are worth more, in fact, if *those* are signed by the author.

[2] It was only as recently as 1927—I say recently because it is within

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Against this, one can, of course, counterpose the cult of the machine as put forth by the Bauhaus, from Gropius to Moholy-Nagy, with its emphasis on the functional and machined quality of products in which elegance is defined by the sheen of the metal or by the austere geometric line. I do not mean to rehearse here the recurrent battle of the ancients and the moderns, so I leave aside the fate of the book as an aesthetic object: like prints, or good pottery, books will remain, to be appreciated for design and taste in the history of craft and the arts.

My theme is the book in relation to information and knowledge, the fears about the book in the computer age, and the questions of which fears may be justified and which are follies.

The book, in many ways, is a pre-industrial, artisan, handicraft kind of item even though an individual bestseller may sell a million or more copies. The industry produces forty thousand or so different trade books a year, plus textbooks, specialised scholarly books, technical and scientific monographs, reference books, religious tracts, hobby and game books, and so on. Books are sold through mail, through old-fashioned bookstores, through chain-owned flashy bookstores, through supermarkets, through college textbook stores, through religious bookshops, and the like. Perhaps the commodity which most approximates the book is the shoe. There are men's shoes and women's shoes and children's shoes, all in diverse sizes; they are of leather, rubber, suede, nylon, and other materials; there are boots and espadrilles, stylish and expensive designer shoes, and simple, mass-produced sneakers and sandals. A store has to carry a large inventory, and each customer must be fitted separately for size, taste, and purpose.

Why do I make this outlandish comparison? Because some people assume that the future of the book may be like the future of the shoe, if the idea of "auto-shoe" ever becomes feasible. "Auto-shoe" is the vision of Michael Dertouzos, who directs the Laboratory of Computer Science at M.I.T. For him, the prototype of auto-shoe, as he has envisaged it and even designed it, may be the way that shoes, and similar commodities, may be produced in the future.[3] In this glossy new world, a patron enters an auto-shoe shop. On one wall are different banks of images. The top bank carries images of different materials: leather, vinyl, suede, and so on. A second bank has different colours along the spectrum, pure or in combination. A third bank illustrates different styles: open toe, buck, monk's strap, wing-tip, and others. The patron places his or her feet on a metal plate, and a holographic image sketches the exact contour of the foot in three dimensions. From a console at the side, the patron now begins to press buttons for the different combinations of materials, colours and style that he or she desires. And, as images, they are flashed on to the foot. When finally satisfied, he or she enters the console numbers on a tape, pulls a lever, and within *x* minutes a bespoke shoe, to the exact fit and taste, is delivered to the customer. One does not have to have a huge inventory of different styles and sizes. Nor does one need a clerk, rushing back and forth and bending over to try and satisfy the whims of the customer. Auto-shoe becomes the simple, automated system to turn production away from the costly, mass-produced system of countless items to the customised needs and taste of the buyer.

And why not "auto-book"? The different technologies are all there—in principle. One can have on-demand publishing, in which an order is placed through a computer network and the "book" is sent as a burst of print by wire to a desk-top copier. Presumably a four-hundred-page book could be sent in four minutes—at a cost. More realistically, one can get "books" on floppy disks, to be inserted into a computer, or a "book" could be "etched" on a laser card or chip, and a page projected on an LED screen. Of course, encyclopaedias can be stored in information-retrieval systems, and particular articles or sections of information recalled on to a screen.

On the production side, authors can (and some now do) deliver copy in machine-readable form on magnetic tape or disks, or provide camera-ready copy, coded for appropriate typeface and book design, which can go into a computerised production system. (It is recorded that Mark Twain was the first author to submit a typewritten manuscript for book production. It is not known who may claim that "first" distinction for machine-readable tapes.)

This combination of computerised production and computerised recall and ordering is the basis of electronic publishing, in which, through different vendors, "information" is available to individuals with receivers—either personal computers or, in the case of some Videotex systems, through the television sets in one's home. Twenty or so years ago, relatively clear boundaries separated computer services (data processing), broadcast communications (radio, television), telephone services, and publishing. The technologies involved in each line were distinct, and few companies overlapped. Today there are crossings and switchings, and one finds oneself intertwined in a variety of different technologies and services. Paul Starr has studied this problem and has observed that

> "Publishing has now become so enmeshed with computers and data-base services that some say publishers should stop thinking of themselves as producers of books or

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my lifetime—that a great book designer could admit modern printing methods into the canon of "the book." As Stanley Morison wrote about the Nonesuch Press:

> "By making conscientious, and not merely commercial, use of modern methods, Mr Meynell has gone far towards proving to many of us that the future of fine printing lies in the hands of those who are prepared to follow his lead and to use modern machinery . . . Until the advent of the Nonesuch Press, mechanical composition was almost entirely identified with shoddy commercialism. Its use by one of the ablest modern typographers has, as we have said, resulted in the production of very fine works of art at low prices, and in the extension of interest in typography to a much wider public than could afford the works of the Victorian private presses."
>
> Stanley Morison: *A Review of Recent Typography* (London), reprinted in the *Nonesuch Prospectus* (1927), p.20.

[3] In *The Computer Age* (ed. M. Dertouzos and Joel Moses), M.I.T. Press (1979).

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> periodicals and recognize that they are information suppliers, not bound to any particular medium. . . ."

It would seem that the technologies of photocopying and information-retrieval have made all that anachronistic. But is that really so?

A BOOK IS a format—the placing of words, using a standardised type, with ink, on paper. What difference does it make if one reads what one needs on a screen or on a print-out, rather than within the pages of a bound book? These are the questions that engage the industry. But I want to shift the discussion from production and marketing and distribution to more relevant intellectual issues, and the follies and fears that have been exaggerated or obscured.

The first question is: What are we talking about? In a letter to John Cole, the director of a Library of Congress study on the future of the book, an advisory-committee member writes:

> "I am enormously fond of books . . . . Nevertheless I am not convinced that they are the most effective means of communicating information that can be developed. We are living in an age of exploding knowledge. There is so much to know."

But this is all wrong, for the writer is confusing *information* with *knowledge*, and the two are not the same. Information is news, facts, statistics, reports, legislation, tax-codes, judicial decisions, resolutions, and the like, and it is quite obvious that we have had an "explosion" of these not only with the multiplication of organisations but because all countries (and the wars between them), and the diverse world polities (and their factions), and the world-wide economy now come under our daily scrutiny in newspapers and television and in the pages of specialised magazines. But that is not necessarily (or even usually) knowledge. Knowledge is interpretation in context, exegesis, relatedness, and conceptualisation, the forms of argument. The results of knowledge are theories: the effort to establish relevant relationships or connections between facts, data, and other information in some coherent form and to explain the reasons for those generalisations.

Perhaps the simplest way of suggesting (not defining) these distinctions is to think of an index at the end of the book. The *name index* is like data; it is simply the listing of the proper names of the individuals (or countries or places) that are mentioned in the book. The *subject index* is information; it is the statement of categories under which topics and names are placed. The *analytical index* (which few authors any longer bother with, but which any serious reader of a book will construct himself) is like knowledge; it is the establishment of relations and cross-references, a semantic set, based on intellectual purposes, in order to understand the logic of argument or the nature of the phenomena being analysed. And we know how difficult that is.

The computer is a marvellous tool for scholars, when it is used for the purposes of information. At Harvard, the Classics Department owns an Anglo-Saxon concordance, an index of all the words in Old English showing the different places where any word occurred. The concordance is the equivalent of ten thousand pages of text, but placed on a PDP 11/44, it fits neatly on to a disk the size of a phonograph record. If you wish to find a reference to a kitchen, or to food, or to fishing, or any activity of the kind, you can locate every example of phrases where these words appear. The University of California at Irvine has been constructing a *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*—a data bank that will include sixty-five million words of ancient Greek literature. A professor preparing, say, a paper on family pets in the ancient world could request every single use of "dog" or "cat" (though he would have to know which animals were used as pets) and could even write a scholarly paper on the use of the word *dog* in Homer, Plato, Aristotle, and the Cynics.

The intellectual issue arises when one asks: What are you looking for, and why? Some judgment has to be made initially, and that judgment has to be related to some intellectual or utilitarian purpose, otherwise one is simply computerising Borges' Library of Babel, in which every word ever uttered has its place in the "data bank" of the endless stacks, or disks, of utterances. An interesting model of a computerised search is the system called *Lexis* (operated by the Mead Corporation), used in legal research. All the decisions of judges in different courts around the country are entered into the system and updated continually. It contains a system of key words, and a legal researcher seeking to find precedents or rules applicable to his own problem uses the keywords to retrieve decisions, and paragraphs of decisions, which seem relevant to what he needs. By interacting with the system, he can rove to and fro, as if turning the pages of a book, but guided by the keywords, like Ariadne's thread, to the different or conflicting views on the problem relevant to him. But *Lexis* is relatively successful because it has a bounded universe, explicit rules to relate keywords, and an obvious pay-off in the retrieved precedents or rules to justify the costs of maintaining the system. A bounded universe such as Old English or the ancient Greek world may justify similar efforts. But all that is largely on the level of information. If one wishes to relate material from one culture to another, then a very different process of search and judgment ensues and—unless every book, document, marriage register, land roll, contract, and literary work were computerised—the process is costly and, in the end, meaningless.

ANOTHER WAY OF looking at the question is to ask: *how* do we read? One can skim, or "mine", a text (by Hi-lighter or pencil); or "talk" to the text (Augustine recalls in surprise that when he ventured on to Ambrose in his study, Ambrose was reading *silently*; a wholly novel mode at the time); or reflect and re-phrase a text. It is in this context that we can begin to assess the role of the computer and the newer modes of electronic, electrostatic, or optical reproduction.

If one's purposes are *information*, clearly defined, then the book is obsolete. The storage in a computer or optical (laser disk) memory, the rapidity of access, the ability to revise—all this makes the newer modes preferable to a book. If one is a

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researcher—a sociologist or a physician or an engineer—one can take a community fact-book, opinion-survey data, market research, census material, health data, and judicial decisions and update these readily and, with computer graphics, convert the digitised data readily into graphs or bar charts or some other pictorial mode. Those findings can then be "manipulated" to re-analyse the previous data in the light of the new material, thus establishing time-series or time-frames which provide a deeper awareness of the nature of these materials or finds.

But if one reads to reflect, to "talk" to the work, to construct an argument, or to interpret a passage, then it is more likely that the format of the book, with its margins and convenience, may be a better mode. Or, as Dr Jerome Lettvin (Professor of Communications, Physiology, and Bio-engineering in the Departments of Computer Science, Biology, and Electrical Engineering at M.I.T.) writes:

> ". . . If I had an electronic library at my command, like the Library of Congress, where I could type in an instruction and it would let me look at such and such a book that would lead to another related book or article, and so forth—that could be of use to me only occasionally. Of much more use would be a library where, when I'm looking for one book I may find another next to it on the shelf that I am really much more interested in. . . .
>
> This is the notion of ambient context that is extremely rich in information value, but is very vaguely defined. But now with current computer architecture, that ambient context gets pushed out of the system. In other words, you are supposed to be like the machines that you operate: specifically goal-oriented by a specific logic, and in a particular way, you can see perfectly clearly what data you are going to have.
>
> Leafing through a book is very different from having a screen run very rapidly past you. I am an old believer in the notion that perception is an active and not a passive thing. That is, you move your eyes to perceive; you move your hands to proceed; you know you move to look. I do not want to have the aspect of everything that I would want to touch brought to me. . . ."

The author of a book called *Turing's Man*, comparing the scholar with a pen and the scientist and philosopher at a computer terminal, writes: "The scientist or philosopher who works with such electronic tools will think in different ways from those who have worked at ordinary desks with paper and pencil."

BUT WILL THIS be so? What is being claimed in such elaborate hyperbole is a new definition of man: not as *homo faber*, the tool-user, or *homo pictor*, the symbol-using animal, but man as "information processor", in which Mind is mapped through codes and algorithms. Methodology in the 17th century, as defined by Descartes, denoted the discipline which would establish a universal method (mathematics) that would answer any question in a compatible-scientific way. And Leibniz dreamt of a machine which, if one programmed a question, would immediately flash the answer. A century later, La Mettrie claimed that *man* is a machine (though he died of gout, probably from stoking the machine too much). Now we have the vision of man as artificial intelligence, a programmable reed. This is the heart of the matter, or the heart of darkness.

BEHIND ALL THIS is a fundamental epistemological issue that has roiled philosophy in recent years—the effort in the 20th century, particularly of Frege, Russell, and Carnap, to establish unambiguous meanings through the use of constructed languages. Let me simply say that after Quine and the later Wittgenstein, it is difficult to sustain the argument that words *represent* things, that there is a "correspondence theory" of truth. This may be somewhat true of information. We may even have pictorial dictionaries, such as Japanese-English, to point to pictured things and give us the word in each language; yet there has to be some common context of understanding; otherwise a piece of glass in a frame may "mean" a television set to a Western person but only a poor mirror to the !Kung bushmen.

Words, in the context of knowledge—for judgment, evaluation, interpretation—are clues to behaviour or guides to action; meanings are grasped in usage; terms are embedded in culture; actions are regulated by rules which derive from agreement. We "construct" reality through the different prisms we employ.

The computer modes are computational and sequential. Everything is played out according to the rules of a formal system, and these rules are finite (otherwise, the computer would go on clacking into infinity). And one seeks an algorithm or decision rule which tells the best way of solving a problem.[4]

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[4] Turing's 1936 paper, it should be pointed out, had a double edge. On the one hand it sought to answer Hilbert's "third question." In 1928, the great German mathematician David Hilbert, in his effort to formalise all mathematics, had asked three questions: Could mathematics be *complete*, so that every statement could either be proved or disproved? Could it be shown to be *consistent* in that the valid steps of proof could not be used for false conclusions? And was mathematics *decidable*; namely, was there a definite method which would, in principle, be applied to any assertion and produce a correct decision on the truth or falsity of that assertion?

Soon after, the young Czech mathematician Kurt Gödel demonstrated that the first two propositions were unprovable, even if true, thus shattering the hopes for a complete formalisation of mathematics. Turing took on the third question. He constructed a "machine" which could "read" any "table of behaviour" of a finite set and compute all the possible combinations of answers to derivations from the original number. These were "computable numbers", any real number (i.e., the rational and irrational numbers, such as $\sqrt{2}$ whose decimal places continue in an unending and non-repeating sequence) that was defined by some definite set of rules. The "machine" could arrive at every number generated through arithmetical operations, every number that could arise in computational mathematics. But Turing's "machine" also demonstrated a limit. An uncomputable number would be an example of an unsolvable problem, so there could not be a definite method for solving all mathematical questions. Thus, the answer to Hilbert's third question was "no." ▶

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Surely one cannot quarrel with these possibilities, so long as one can clearly define a problem, establish the parameters, spell out the alternative combinations and permutations, and trace out the "one best way", or optimal solution. This was the dream of Pascal and the vision of a Laplacean universe. If the world is a "logical set", then reduction of thought to computational modes is a possible goal. But the problem is not just "the world" (and the question whether there is a constitutive order to its internal connections), but the language we use, imperfectly, to describe and understand the world—of nature, society, and the self.

There is, first, the question of *formalisation*. Natural language is created and reworked by usage, and the effort to establish underlying rules (say, of homologies), so that we can have an algorithm which will classify sentences correctly—runs afoul of the messiness of natural language. An adept of Fowler will immediately understand why. Take the problem of *syllepsis* and *zeugma*, two figures of speech often confused with one another:

Syllepsis: Miss Bolo went home in a flood of tears and a sedan chair.
(*or*)
He lost his hat and temper.

Zeugma: With weeping eyes and hearts.
(*or*)
Kill the boys and the luggage. (Shakespeare's *Henry V*)

The syllepsis is grammatically correct (even though outlandish) but requires a single word to be understood *in a different sense with each of its pair*. In the zeugma, the single word fails to give sense with one of its pair, so that for the meaning to be clear an additional word is needed, such as "kill the boys and *destroy* the luggage."

At stake is the relation of syntax to semantics, of word order to meaning. In writing homologous rules, one requires a common syntax. Yet such an algorithm cannot deal with the nature of idiom. For example: (*a*) She drove him to school; (*b*) She drove him to drink. Syntactically, they are homologous; semantically, quite different.[5]

BUT THE FUNDAMENTAL questions are not the technical complexities of grammar, formidable as they are, but the nature of thought and the "reductionism" which the computational mode seeks to introduce. We can, in one instance, follow a distinction of John Dewey's (in his *Art as Experience*). Dewey admired science and thought its methods and modes of inquiry one of the great achievements of intelligence. Yet Dewey distinguished between *expression* and *statement*. Science states meanings; art expresses them. Statements set forth the conditions under which knowledge can be gained or an experience may be derived. Yet

> "the poetic as distinct from prosaic, aesthetic as distinct from science, expression as distinct from statement, does something different from leading to an experience. It *constitutes* one." (Emphasis added.)

The poetic expression is thinking in tropes. One is not pointing to things but expanding the imagination through metaphor and metonomy, through allegory and parable. The converse is reification, the frozen mimicry of thought to which ideology reduces speech. The crown and the sceptre invoke a sense of history and the sweep of pageantry; the Kremlin and the White House, the dreary rhetoric of political cliché. Thinking by the pathways of the "electronic tool" risks constriction of the blood vessels of thought; the book allows the mind to soar.

In another instance, we can turn to Kant, who brought metaphysics from the world and its predicates to Mind and its categories. For Kant, what we know is a function of the categories or concepts we establish: we perceive facts but we create relationships, selecting from the blooming buzzing confusion the aspects of the world we seek to understand. Yet behind it all, in the noumena that we cannot fathom, is what Kant called "the mystery of synthesis." How do we put together, and why, the different components of what we puzzle out from the world? Man's creative capacity begins with the pervasive prefix, *re*. What distinguishes us from other species is our ability to reorganise, rearrange, reorder our experiences and to redesign our world. But the art and the act remain a mystery.

THE WORLD is double-storeyed: a logical order on a factual disorder. But there is no single logical order. Throughout a single day we experience, literally, millions of "bits" of experience, hear of and read about thousands of events, meet and talk to hundreds of persons, yet in the end we select a small portion, what we judge to be "relevant", and group these together, in recall, as the knowledge worth remembering. It is theory which decides what we observe; as

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On the other hand, Turing had found a "mechanical means", i.e., outside human intervention, to solve in principle any computational problem arrived at within mathematics. As his biographer Andrew Hodges writes, Turing:

> "had proved that there was no 'miraculous machine' that could solve all mathematical problems, but in the process he had discovered something almost equally miraculous, the idea of a universal machine that could take over the work of *any* machine."

For a precise discussion of Turing's work, see Andrew Hodges, *Alan Turing: The Enigma* (1983) especially pp.91-110. This book should not be confused with *Turing's Man: Western Culture in the Computer Age*, by J. David Bolter (University of North Carolina Press, 1984), a shallow work which makes extravagant claims for the consequences of the computer on modes of thought.

[5] I will leave aside the problem of an algorithm for the correct usages of the auxiliaries *shall* and *should, will* and *would*. Otto Jespersen took 117 pages in his *Modern Grammar on Historical Principles* to explore the distinctions, recording 700 years of inconsistency and shifting usages. Fowler, in *The King's English*, devotes 21 pages to *shall* and *will* and, in despair, says: "It is unfortunate that the idiomatic use, while it comes by nature to southern Englishmen . . . is so complicated that those who are not to the manner born can hardly acquire it."

Since the terms involve the problems of conditional, volitional, and obligational (ought to), not to mention the quasi-conditional and quasi-volitional, the need for clarity and consistency is great, but whether that need can be met is a question not yet answered.

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Einstein wrote:

> "There is no inductive method which could lead to the fundamental concepts of physics."

What complicates our understanding is that our picture of the world comes from a limited experimental basis, yet the laws of physics contradict our mundane movement in the world and derive from a leap which is not the leap of faith but the leap of imagination. The difficulty in grasping the idea of special relativity, and its denial of a Newtonian world (or more accurately, the restriction of a Newtonian world to a delimited range of relationships), comes from our view of universal time, applicable to all observers, and of events in space as a whole, ideas that derive from our everyday experience in observing the sequence of events. Yet the idea of the dilation of time, of no "absolute" standard for the measurement of time, makes no sense in a world ordered by Chronos and his metrical wand. Deprived of any certainty that our concepts have a connection with corresponding experiences, as Gerald Holton contends, we begin to see the precariousness of theory construction as well. Or as Einstein quite picturesquely put it (in his essay on the space-time continuum, in the older *Britannica*), when he cited a Talmudic parable: Who first discovered water? We do not know. But the fish did not.

How to stand "outside ourselves", to achieve the necessary intellectual and aesthetic distance which allows us to reorder and rearrange our worlds, is an act of creativity that we still do not understand. That is where imagination and science (a simple definition of knowledge) join.

AUTHORS

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Gavin Ewart's latest book of poems, *The Young Pobble's Guide to his Toes*, was published this spring by Hutchinson, who last year brought out *The Ewart Quarto*.

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THE SCENE: a panelled Town Hall committee-room designed in Municipal Edwardian. Around the table: a dozen or so Agatha Christie characters—the Major, the bank manager, the housewife, the company secretary, the retired schoolmistress, the chartered accountant, the golf pro, the clerk. At least, that's what they look like. Who are they? Our local Conservation Area Advisory Committee, chaired by a blessedly unbrutalist architect. For several hours, on the first Monday evening of every month, we sift planning applications, niggle about windows and cornices, do our best to save threatened buildings and ward off towering monstrosities.

It's a very British institution—yet another of those "voluntary" bodies into which we're dragooned by flattery, moral blackmail, and appeals to our better selves. In Latin countries, they're less common: there, citizens tend to expect the authorities to take charge, like a congregation watching the priest officiate at Mass. Anglo-Saxons, by contrast, bustle about, form committees, march, demonstrate, lobby, and write to *The Times*. A French historian friend believes that the habit began with the early knights of the shire. It's certainly spread, since Columbus, to the early evenings of North America.

Roped in *ex officio* on behalf of a residents' association, I relish playing fly-on-the-wall. But doubts sometimes bother me. Every so often, the committee receives visitors—developers and their architects. The developers are usually dumb-ox businessmen, bursting with irritation behind their impassive faces. The architects can look like toadies, skilled only at squeezing office space into some costly crevice. Time and again they return, with minor cosmetic changes to doomed and greedy plans. Time and again the committee rebuffs them, gently, politely—maddeningly. Cross and silent, they roll up their blueprints, snap their papers into brief-cases, collect their hats, and walk out. They can barely resist slamming the door.

I sympathise. The developers hold assets—a decrepit building or a plot of waste ground, in a favoured, fashionable district. They have mortgages or bank loans. Times are hard, interest-rates alarming. Banks and building societies put on pressure. So the developers hire local architects to dream up buildings that can plausibly hope for planning permission. They know the regulations; they know the local officials; they may even know some persuadable Councillors. The plans look promising, profitable: the procedures look like routine. Then comes the unexpected snag. There's this ridiculous new hurdle—an advisory committee of voluntary busybodies who fuss and twitter and peck like middle-aged middle-class middle-brow conservationist hens. What is this Conservation Area? An Indian Reservation for the nostalgic bourgeoisie? A fossil museum? A waxworks in period fancy-dress? Doesn't it smack of the jocular antiquarianism heard on British radio?—interchangeable programmes about old steam railways run by enthusiasts at weekends. Must the British always travel with their backs to the engine, their eyes fixed on the past?

If the developers ever used that railway metaphor, it would soon let them down. Who's driving the engine? Who laid the track? Above all, who bought the tickets? Most of us didn't ask for a one-way journey to a ferro-concrete destination. Our modest Advisory Committee is one of many attempts to propose a less forbidding future: to adapt past forms, not destroy them; to adopt a visual mode that's in harmony with their humane scale.

So far, so good. But while I can quell any twinge of fellow-feeling for the office-block developers, I'm still not quite accustomed to another facet of our committee's work. This is its concern for interiors.

IT FIRST STRUCK ME when I saw the minutes of a meeting I'd missed. Grave concern was expressed about two plastic columns some chap had installed in his drawing-room. They may have looked ghastly; but what business was it of ours? Well, his house belonged to the Crown, and was a listed building in a Conservation Area: so we fuss-pots had a case. Since then, we've commented freely on many plans for interior refurbishment—some of them ambitious enough to make *Citizen Kane* look like *Coronation Street*. It's amazing what millionaires want to spend their money on. As the grandiose blueprints unrolled, I began to see the point of our prodnose vetting. An Englishman's home is indeed his castle: most castles nowadays are part of the national heritage.

You may feel, as I sometimes do, that work on the committee is turning us all into bureaucratic snoopers, trying to mind other people's business. But if you look at some of the ways that Regency buildings have been gutted and stuffed with incongruous décor—even, in the past, by the Crown itself—you may come to agree that in certain cases private interiors can be a matter of public concern.

I WAS REMINDED of this when Mrs Thatcher came back from Washington, unable to persuade President Reagan to curb the soaring dollar. Scarcely had she touched down than we heard her slapped in the face. The dollar's rise, we and she were told, was no concern of anyone but America: it was a domestic triumph, won by the US economy and by international confidence. The Japanese and the Europeans should stop whingeing and put their own houses in order. The words, of course, were not so blunt; but the message was clear.

What it resembled was the reaction of the Crown tenant

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who'd erected plastic pillars: it's my business what I do in my own house. Well, they used to say that about customs tariffs. In the old days—the not unequivocally or incontrovertibly good old days—every government decided for itself what duties it would levy on goods coming into the country: it was domestic policy—so there. Occasional bargains might be struck with other nations; but in the last resort, and often in the first, the national Government was boss.

It didn't last. Recessions and economic crises gradually forced Western nations to cooperate. After World War II, they established formal rules and procedures, in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Customs duties and quota restrictions on imports were no longer purely domestic concerns. Like the appearance and maintenance of listed or historic buildings, they'd become everybody's business. "Interdependence" was the buzz-word at the time.

In 1962, when President Kennedy asked Congress for special tariff powers to negotiate with the European Community, he included in the request the notion of adjustment aid to help US industry to adapt to lower protection. It looked for a short time as if Western nations might begin to tackle, not merely tariffs, but the whole range of problems underlying that of trade protection: competitive advantage, hidden subsidy, currency levels, interest-rates, and so on. The Dallas assassination, the Viet Nam war, and the floating of the dollar put paid to any such hopes. Trade remained formally liberalised, but protection took other forms. Tacit economic nationalism replaced any prospect of international economic management. The door was closed against negotiation on what was held to be domestic policy.

President Reagan's remarks on the dollar were made from behind that door. Their tenor was understandable. The US recovery may owe more to Keynes than to Reaganomics; but it seems to be real. The Europeans, in Washington eyes, do look like grumbling and quarrelsome enlisted men. And since Viet Nam—America's first defeat, and on what some Americans thought was the wrong side—there's been a profound need to recover self-confidence, as well as self-respect. In this psychodrama, the President's role has been crucial. Ford stood for normality, Carter for good intentions; Reagan uses the rhetoric of strength. To foreigners, it sounds like US Gaullism. Perhaps Gaullism, as in France, is a necessary stage.

What's disturbing is the long-term damage it can do. French Gaullism mildly infected Germany. US Gaullism risks reviving anti-Americanism in Europe. The agitation over Cruise missiles may be largely over, but dangerous habits of mind remain. Slipshod sloganeers equate "the Superpowers." "Third Force" dreams persist like a palimpsest under more truthful texts. "Star Wars" debates threaten to reopen issues that seemed closed only fifteen years ago. On a primitive level, American "brashness", "big business", "commercialism", "vulgarity", are denounced again as they used to be in the late 1940s. It's mostly pretty silly and dispiriting. Fear, anger, and envy are poor counsellors.

Yet they, too, are understandable. There are too many analogies between the spring of 1985 and the decade of the 1960s. Then, as now, the United States was running a deficit, financed by foreigners whom confidence and good earnings induced to place their money in Washington or New York. Then, as some day in the future, the whole dizzy structure was bound to crumble. It was 1971 before President Nixon had to float the dollar and jettison the last shreds of the international monetary system devised at Bretton Woods. When will the present party be over, and how will it end?

THE WORST HYPOTHESIS, feared by some economists, is a collapse of confidence in the dollar, followed by efforts to save it by jacking up interest-rates. This would not only damage Europeans, who'd be likely to follow suit—not to mention many Third-World debtors—it would also gravely harm, halt, or reverse the world's shaky recovery. So let's hope that this scenario can be scrapped.

A second has been tried already. At the end of February, Japan and a number of European countries mounted an old-fashioned rescue operation, to sell the dollar down. It worked, but only marginally and for a time. The reason? The much vaster amounts of money now in circulation by comparison with twenty years ago. Today, European central banks can still influence the currency markets, but they can't control them. It's almost like blowing into the wind.

So, for the moment, everyone imitates Micawber. Dealers can still make a great deal of money; so can speculators. Exporters can sell more readily to America, although many would prefer stability to uncertainty. Those who suffer are American farmers, parts of American industry, and foreign borrowers facing dizzy interest-rates. If all this continues, Europe's recovery will be slowed down, and protectionist pressure in the United States will be stepped up. It's a long way from the days of President Kennedy, when "interdependence" might have meant joint decision-making, not mutual mayhem. For, of course, our economies are interdependent whether we like it or not.

HOW MIGHT WE START moving away from economic nationalism and towards more shared responsibility? Specifically, how might we start building a more stable monetary system?

Forty years ago, the lead came from the United States. It was leadership of high quality and great sophistication, building international systems rather than asserting national power. The power was indisputable, and the systems served everyone's national interests: but the American role was that of impresario as much as superstar. Today, such dual casting seems impossible. Only pressure can ease the superstar from centre stage; and only in Europe is a new production likely to be masterminded. It won't be a revival of that dated favourite "Bretton Woods": but it might involve eventual transatlantic partnership.

I'd fleetingly hoped that Mrs Thatcher might initiate it when she came back from her Washington trip. Britain, after all, has one obvious step to take if she wants to influence world money markets. Having only partially joined the European Monetary System, she could with advantage come in fully, taking part in the exchange-rate mechanism, the so-

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called European "snake." In itself, this might help stabilise sterling: but its real importance would be as a prelude to further moves ahead.

The European Monetary System is still in its infancy. It has an accounting unit, the Ecu, increasingly used in private transactions, and soon to appear as denominator of travellers' cheques. But while the Ecu is potentially a parallel European currency, it's neither minted nor printed. It could be both. As public relations, this would have resounding impact. Before long, the Ecu could then begin gradually to replace Europe's national currencies—which is why governments are so wary of it. Once there were real Ecus about, most sensible people would want them as a hedge against exchange risks. The European dollar would have arrived.

IF IT CAME, many other things would have to come too. An issuing bank or group of banks; a European Federal Reserve System; much closer coordination of monetary policy; in the end, perhaps a single European budget with agreed provision for regional, sectoral, and social aid. No wonder national governments hang back.

But think what they—and we—are missing. If there were a European dollar, it would be a counterweight to the US dollar which currently calls our tune. Oil prices, for one thing, could be quoted in Ecus. Ecu bonds could attract capital which at present goes into US Government securities. Ecu flotations could help finance industrial restructuring, on terms which wouldn't fuel inflation, since interest-rates wouldn't have to be so high. A real Ecu market might even help foster European venture capital of the type that makes and loses fortunes but either way finances Silicon Valley.

And, beyond Europe's more parochial quest for a place in the sun beside America, a fully developed European Monetary System, with its own dollar, could help initiate something more important still. Its new-found strength could enable it to persuade the United States that exchange-rates, interest-rates, and monetary policy generally can no longer be treated as purely domestic issues. Plastic pillars in the drawing-room—even in the White House—are nowadays everyone's concern.

M

Doubts about Devon

I have my doubts about Devon, such a lush
Green growing crowded coloured countryside;
Even the air so soft and warm and sweet,
Like cow's breath, innocent; and all the flowers
Thrusting from hedgerows, thick in yards and lanes,
Swelling out every field and bank with bloom.

Well: nearly forty years ago, in the gloom
Of a crowded afternoon cinema (tear-stains
Stuck on my cheeks, from watching films for hours),
An airman pressed my hand, followed me to the street,
Came to the bus-stop, joined the bus for the ride
Back to my camp, for company, not to push

Or pester, he promised. I remember how he would brush
His little moustache with his finger, and his pride
In being Canadian, not a Yank, and his neat
Pale face, brown eyes, blue forage-cap, and his powers
Of cheeky and chatty speech: which is all that remains
In my mind, except that he wouldn't go, and the loom

Of trees and bushes at night, a stile, no room
For two to get over, the polite and careful pains
I took to send him home; and then he towers
And I use my unarmed combat practice, and meet
The fact that it works, and the fact that he may have died,
And be here still, in some flowering tree or bush.

Ruth Silcock

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John Lancaster

A Division of Labour

(Alfred Meakins Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent, 1964)

Rex, The Dish-maker

The iron template
Is slowly lowered
To shape the piece of clay
Newly splat
Upon the plaster mould.
Then the maker's eye
And arm of years
Create a "Doric" tray.
And in the spinning wheel
Glazed eyes imagine
Its four-star destination
Or recall the caravan at Rhyl.
For no rush
To meet the export order:
Rex is staff.

Chris, The Plate-maker

Piece-work Chris thinks
In dozens,
Cools off at dinner-time
In Tunstall baths
And floating dreams
Of Annie the Sponger.

In the afternoon,
Another five dozens
Will buy

The engagement ring.

Doris, The Cup-handler

The six feet lump with hands like spades
Deftly joins up cup and handle

As only seconds slip
Into eight hours

Of joining up cups and handles
With endless fags and talk

Of bingo, television
And sex,

Yelling down the shop
To the blushing young under-manager,

"Come 'ere and let me see
If your rhubarb wants pulling."

Terry, The Mould-runner

Not all there
And always late,

All day
He carried the moulds

In and out of ovens
With no time to by-pass

The unpleasantness
Of one hundred degrees

Until the day he stopped
To tell the world,

"The clay is dead.
The clay is dead."

Hilda, The Fettler

For fifty years she filed
Or, as we say, fettled,

Rough edges to dust
From unfired pots

Until each lung became
A piece of clay

So that when she retired
They could present her

With an unremitting cough.

Frank, Time and Motion

White coat
With built-in biros
Ticks-off late-comers,
Ticks clip-board,
Cheerios and,
Blind to V-signs,
Microscopes clock-cards
Looking for seconds
Each the width
Of a grey hair,
The thickness
Of a pound-note,
The dimension
Of his own life.

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Frank Ormsby

From "A Northern Spring"

For the Record

When I stabbed a Belfast gigolo at the Plaza,
they transferred me to the country to cool down.
There were no poolrooms or waterfront hotels,
just woods, cows, a village, flat fields
and enough fresh air to poison a city boy.
And when the MPs kicked me senseless in Duffy's Bar
for being a "wise guy", I burned their quarters down
one night in May with gas from their own jeeps
and they could prove nothing.
Cornered at St-Marcouf, I shot my way
to a medal and commendation (posthumous),
a credit at last to my parents, whoever they were,
and the first hero produced by the State Pen.

Grenade-fishing in the Orne

Grenade-fishing in the Orne—a far cry
from tickling trout in Utah at seventeen,
or lines trailed from the footbridge of a stream
clean off the mountains.
The fish rolled to the surface, shock in their eyes,
a river-plague, a sickly visitation.

They flew me back to Utah with shock in my eyes,
that rimmed and frozen look the marines call
the two-thousand-yard stare.
The bridges are all targets now, the pools
belch like a hot springs and dead faces
balloon to the surface.
The dark flies glisten, the faces bloom in the sun.

Some of us stayed forever

Some of us stayed forever, under the lough
in the guts of a Flying Fortress,
sealed in the buckled capsule or dispersed
with odds and ends—propellers, dogtags, wings,
a packet of Lucky Strike, the instructor's gloves—
through an old world of shells and arrowheads,
dumped furniture, a blind Viking prow.
In ten years or a hundred we will rise
to foul your nets with crushed fuselage.
Our painted stork, nosing among the reeds
with a bomb in its beak, will startle you for a day.

Ste Mère-Eglise

The church was a nest of snipers. For three hours
we crouched in courtyards, crawled in a cobbled square
from cover to cover. The people had hidden or fled.
Baedeker never saw Ste Mère-Eglise
the way we did.

Next year I'll make a pilgrimage in long shorts
with camera, sandals and a shirt so loud
the French will need sunglasses.
Just once I'll say a prayer and walk upright
through every street. Afterwards there will be time

for wine, for souvenirs, for war museums.

McCook, Nebraska

At ease on the banks of the Republican
the three months I duck through Europe.
My mother draws the curtains. This week, again,
the streets are empty of uniforms, no one like me
is crouched on her veranda.
Thousands of miles from Cherbourg and Falaise
the log schoolhouse, the Congregational Church
are in no one's sights but my father's.
He cleans his glasses, settles to read aloud
what's been happening abroad, the latest news
of war in Europe, war in the Pacific, war on the Eastern Front.

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NOTES & TOPICS

London Commentary

The Candle of Dresden

By Edward Pearce

AN INTERESTING OCCURRENCE in what I might call my other life—at the *Daily Telegraph*—has been to watch the controversy flowing from the publication of a leader to mark the anniversary of that wicked night of 13-14 February 1945 when the city of Dresden was turned into a fire of the sort which must have burnt in the mythological Christian hell. The leader went some distance to embrace the Willy Brandt view of the wickedness committed by one's own countrymen—acknowledging the evil and making a full apology for it.

I doubt if we have ever received so many letters for a single editorial (I have been given the figure 360), and what a diversity they represented—from the mature sense of a great newspaperman in retirement (Wilfrid Sendall), to the spluttering rage of a retired Air Vice-Marshal (Donald Bennett). The concern of most was to rationalise backwards, to invent a military utility which never existed; not a few talked the language which I heard privately from one of our elder television personalities, who rejoiced that we had killed so many Germans. Quite as unwise were the handful of unilateralists who wrote to agree about Dresden and argue for the abrogation of our present defences.

For my part I have never been more convinced of what an evil the childish instinct of patriotism becomes. The British will not grasp what was done in their name. They become indignant, and quite rightly so, if an Irishman sets a sophisticated fuse and kills a dozen people in what after all he regards as a war. The figures for Dresden are estimated by Max Hastings at "something upwards of 30,000 dead." And is it supposed that if a German military leader could have been identified, as Air Marshall Harris was, with those deaths, he would not have been indicted, tried and hanged at Nuremberg as a war criminal? But the British in 1945 were the winning side, or more precisely a modest strand in it. Bomber Command was something we were proud of, though Churchill and some of the wiser military had their own sense of a wrong, and Harris was duly punished, not by a War Crimes Tribunal but by denial of the peerage he longed for. It was the British Establishment's way of setting itself at a little distance from a useful brute with whom it would not care to be too closely identified. Querulous and resentful, Harris left for White Rhodesia, which must have been a congenial place. Field Marshal Keitel should have had such luck!

Part of the reason for the Dresden crime, and the ones which preceded it in such cities as Hamburg, is fortuitous. We developed the bomber on a heavy scale and with unBritish efficiency; the Germans pursued first fighters, then rockets, and the little-afflicted cities of England owe a debt to the lethargic incompetence of Hermann Goering. Fear of bombers, a "bomb culture" even, had been strong in pre-War Britain. Remember the trenches in Hyde Park, Baldwin's remark about the "bomber always getting through", and that premonitory episode in Orwell's *Coming Up for Air* when George Bowling witnesses an accidental aerial bombing and identifies it as the future? Coventry, which the British made a tremendous moral issue at the time, involved 584 deaths—a 1:50 ratio for those killed in Dresden in a single night.

We had the weapon of the bomber and had it in a period when laser technology for accuracy was non-existent. Any bombing would have been a bloody and haphazard affair but it took "Bomber" Harris, like Leopold Stokowski, to demand heavy orchestration—the carpet-bombing which accidentally or deliberately set up the fire-storms. These drew living innocent civilians by vacuum suction into the furnace which he and the Pathfinders had lit. That such acts can still be defended, that the withered old men who took part have so little sense of the burning of human flesh as still to be writing to the newspapers in incoherent fury at criticism of "our brave boys" should, but does not, surprise me.

THERE WAS ANOTHER ASPECT to the Dresden tragedy which is not readily admitted to. The inherent weakness of Britain as a military power at that stage in the War was clear enough. If we were one of "the Big Three" it was a sham position not warranted by our current contribution to victory. We may have been the heroes of the Battle of Britain, but we were the humiliated incompetents of Singapore, Dieppe, Arnhem and Crete. Bombing capacity was the one thing sufficiently matured in the aircraft factories and RAF training to represent a truly substantial British strength. Never mind the doubtful utility of much of it, never mind the misapplication of resources, in thousand-bomber raids. Here was a chance to swagger, an opportunity to keep up the Great Power posture for just a little longer. A candle of burning Germans to light the Russians on their way to Berlin was a fine way to ingratiate ourselves with the real powers.

The British have never come to terms with the extent to which their military permitted themselves at certain times to behave roughly like the enemy they were supposed to hate for his barbarism. The destruction of German cities, of which Dresden—wiped out a few weeks before the conclusion of a war—was the grand finale, had less in common with an aerial attack on a legitimate target (bridges, factories, marshalling yards, *Luftwaffe* bases) than with those acts of village-killing which put the Germans in so vile a light. Oradour sur Glâne, Lidice, and Marzabotto (whose hero, Major Reder, received such a sympathetic reception when he returned to Austria

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earlier this year), these were acts of punitive destruction occasioned by local resistance. In so far as Harris's doings had a rationale, they served to cause terror; they were acts of exemplary death in great numbers: morally indistinguishable from Lidice, only bigger.

Dresden, for heaven's sake, was a ceramics centre full of frightened refugees. We couldn't see their faces (as the German officers could in those village killings), but surely even in Whitehall some half-farthing's-worth of imagination might have been exercised.

IT WAS WARTIME, and in wartime men's sense of right deserts them. They think, as our patriotic TV personality still thinks forty years later, that they are "killing Germans" and a good thing too, or that they are killing Jews or Arabs or Gooks or Ndebele or whoever's turn it is next at the hands of the righteous. Most countries and certainly most politicians are so misty-eyed with patriotism, whether it is the flag-saluting American sort or that odd, oblivious indifference to other people which the British and Chinese have in common, that it is a dangerous business saying "we were wrong."

However, saying that you are wrong is not and never will be the same thing as that terrible self-hatred which gripped so many Americans during the Viet Nam War. Waving flags is childish; burning them is, if possible, worse. The unamiable defeatism which takes a pleasure in the victory of enemies, a spirit which was strong in the West in the 1960s and early '70s, one which demonstrated against war and in favour of the Viet Cong, seems to me not worthy of consideration.

Total pacifism is slightly more respectable intellectually, but it is unknowing kin to flag-burning, the preserve not only of humane people making larger demands of the world than the world has goodness for, but also of the unpleasantly smug, the unco-guid and those who dislike not merely drum-roll patriotism, but their own roots.

"Sanity" is a recurring word in the Peace Movement. It is even the name of one of their journals. But surely sanity in military matters is a rational balance between the common-sense ethics which make gratuitous killing wrong and that technically alerted state of elaborate defence which is most compatible with not giving in and not going off. One of the many lessons from Ben Pimlott's fascinating biography of Hugh Dalton, Labour's first post-War Chancellor, is that it reminds us of Dalton's tough-minded efforts to snap Clement Attlee and the rest of the pre-War Labour leadership out of non-resistance. The language of almost pure pacifism was being talked in the highest Labour circles, until very late, by men who somehow also wanted so much to oppose Hitler.

YET WHEN THEY CAME to power and accepted the very war they had not been able to contemplate, neither they nor their Conservative colleagues did anything to deter the actions of Sir Arthur Harris. The fact of a war breaking out moves people from the most etiolated contemplation of their own ethics to acquiescence in fire-storms without them noticing. That is not sanity; and, more to the point, it is not good government. In fact it is not government at all. My own impression, from the biographies and histories of recent wartime politicians, is of the comparative helplessness of government when faced with the technical patter and insistent demands of the military.

WE KNOW NOW that bombing Dresden was a useless and superfluous act as well as a very wicked one. But armed services and their programmes have a momentum of their own.

Patriotic blackmail plus number-crunching (however bogus), plus the need to cut some sort of figure, all served to entrap men of Churchill's subtlety and moral quality into approving things which were as alien to them as I believe those Dresden raids were alien to England. For which reason we have to hang on to rules even in wartime, especially in wartime. We do not say, now or ever, "Oh, well, that was wartime. People get killed in wars." Nobody gets killed, somebody kills him.

That rule applies to the creative negligence of the Sabra and Chatila camps and to the new tragic events occurring in the Lebanon as I write. It makes Mr Justice Kahane, with his report apportioning guilt and contributory fault like a true judge, the best sign out of Israel at a time which has not done that country honour. It makes the British cover-up on the *Belgrano* and the prepared truths and untruths of Mr John Stanley something to curl up at. Nobody's military can be trusted to abstain from the excesses we all attribute to other people's military. But the acts committed by our troops or by friends and allies actually have the same historical weight as those of adversaries.

Governments, alas, find themselves in war the custodians of acts committed by a military nominally subordinate, but for practical purposes in charge. If Admirals want to destroy a ship which constitutes no conceivable threat, for whatever reasons of miscalculation or military reflex, it is a government which ends up by mendaciously misleading the country and protecting men over whom it had no control. A "Great War Leader" is, much of the time, a pure sham, wringing his or her hands and telegraphing assent, very nearly a constitutional Prime Minister in the sense that the Queen is a constitutional monarch.

Governments are slow to talk about indefensible acts, less because they commanded them (though clearly the Nazis and Stalin fit their own pattern of central-command terror) than because every shaft of light, every Ponting, demonstrates a government *not* in control, but on ceremonial duty. Which is why governments, which are not quite coterminous with scoundrels, take refuge so frequently in patriotism. "These are our brave boys. . . . How dare any civilian protected by us during the War insult the heroic men of Bomber Command?" Only the losers run out of patriotism and say "*Befehl ist Befehl* (orders are orders). . . ."

Patriotism excused the great cull of the First World War, the setting of citizens in the name of national glory to each other's extermination. The words were splendid. Lloyd George, that ablest and worst of men, spoke movingly; men

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wept, and the graves stretch out of sight. Generals had a wonderful time—all criticism was blanketed either by "national security" or "our patriotic duty." To one military historian even now, we underfulfilled our quota of the dead. Faced with what military men do when they get near power—obtuse men like Haig, crude warlords like Harris, to say nothing of the little-known commanders responsible for action in the Afghanistan war—the less scope they are given the better.

If sanity keeps military men in the columns of newspapers in a permanent state of outrage it also has to do with printing the truth about past wars without benefit of patriotism. A lucid contemplation of what has been done in our name and which we ignorantly cheered on at the time, from First Ypres to the latest shoot-out in the Middle East, is education enough. We need neither bullfrog patriots nor the Surrender Lobby to disturb the melancholy condition which constitutes all the peace we are going to get.

Of Secrecy & Intelligence

British Dilemmas—By ROBERT CECIL

PUBLIC INTEREST and concern continues to focus on the security of the state, the rights of the individual, and the way in which these elements—both vital to political life in a democracy—can be reconciled. Discussion has been influenced partly by heightened East-West tension; partly by recent security scandals (especially those concerning Geoffrey Prime and Michael Bettaney[1]); and partly by the ever-growing sophistication of the means of surveillance available to the state. These were highlighted in Channel 4's briefly banned television programme, the *20/20 Vision* feature *MI5's Official Secrets*. In addition, the virtual abandonment in this country of what remained of the bipartisan approach to foreign and defence policy, as it operated in the 1950s and 1960s, has increased pressure on the loyalty of Civil Servants; and this in turn has directed attention to the Official Secrets Act, which was drawn up under very different conditions before the First World War. Here the trial of Clive Ponting is highly relevant.

Evidently these are all matters of importance and, in certain instances, of urgency. None the less it is essential that, before the government deals with them, there should be full public debate and that, as far as possible, consensus should be reached. This is all the more necessary because, in comparison with some other democratic countries, we in Great Britain are a long way from the starting-line. In the USA for example, the legislature has been intermittently involved ever since the CIA was set up by legislative act in 1947. Senate Committees, such as that under Senator Frank Church which reported in 1975, have taken a close look at Intelligence activities and, as a result, a permanent Select Committee on Intelligence has been established. Important principles are enshrined in such legislation as the Freedom of Information Act and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

In this country the situation is very different. No statute brought MI5 and MI6 to birth; presumably their existence rests upon royal prerogative, following the ancient maxim: *salus populi suprema lex*. The lack of legislation governing one aspect of domestic surveillance, telephone tapping, was noted in 1979 by the European Court of Human Rights. The Government announced at the end of February this year its intention to fill the gap, and persisted in the face of the outcry following upon disclosures in the Channel 4 feature. This outcry once more exposed the fact that Parliament is, in practice, if not in theory, debarred from exercising supervision over the Secret Services. A Security Commission exists, but it is an arm of the executive, employed to enquire into errors and abuses. Even if one does not fully subscribe to the broad thesis that secrecy promotes inefficiency, experience gives no ground for holding the contrary view.

If we are to cut a path through the dense undergrowth that surrounds state security and the Secret Services, we shall have to make at the outset certain stipulations, on which, it is to be hoped, all men of goodwill can agree. It will not be possible, of course, to conciliate those who, either because of naivety, or because at heart they are enemies of freedom, do not wish the state to have power to defend itself. My four preliminary stipulations are as follows:

ROBERT CECIL *was in the Diplomatic Service (1936-67) and during World War II was one of the personal assistants of "C", the head of SIS (1943-45). In recent years he has taught at Reading University and was chairman of the Graduate School of Contemporary European Studies (1976-78). He recently contributed to "The Missing Dimension" (ed. Andrew and Dilks; Macmillan, 1984), a study of espionage.*

[1] Geoffrey Prime, who was employed at Government Communications HQ (GCHQ), was convicted in November 1982 of spying for the USSR. Michael Bettaney, who was employed by MI5, was convicted in May 1984 of offering his services to the Soviet Embassy in London.

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1. An attempt must be made to define what we mean by Security, Intelligence, Treason, etc. If there is to be legislation, its subject-matter must first be clarified.

2. Any charter of the Secret Services, or legislation legitimising them, should not have a purely negative or restrictive character, indicating the limits of their authority; it should set out positively the services to the state and its citizens that these organisations are expected to perform.

3. Every effort should be made to enter this minefield on a broad, non-partisan front; nothing could be worse for the people of this country, and for the Services themselves, than to involve them in a party-political wrangle. Politicisation of Intelligence must at all costs be avoided.

4. The problem of recruitment into the Secret Service should be seriously tackled; as the Bettaney case illustrated, it is not enough to have a few sleuths "shopping around" among the bright young men at the older universities. More systematic procedures are required, if further scandals are to be avoided.

All these stipulations point to a full and frank debate, which should precede submission of legislation to Parliament. Because no government in the past has taken Parliament into its confidence, Members are scarcely better informed than the public. Debate in Parliament alone is not enough.

ALTHOUGH THESE STIPULATIONS, as stated, may sound elementary, they raise some formidable problems. What, for example, do we mean in time of peace by "national security"? It is all the more important to know because in this area we cannot rely on the Courts. In the Hosenball case (1977), Lord Denning ruled as follows:

"There is a conflict here between interests of national

The Mole Hunt

IT IS five months since Peter Wright, a former MI5 officer, created an unprecedented furore in Whitehall by breaking his cover to declare on television that British security has been so incompetent and riddled with Soviet moles that a clean-out is urgently needed.

He followed this with a 150-page confidential document supplying first-hand evidence for his allegations, in which he said he was 99% certain that Sir Roger Hollis, the former director-general of MI5, had been a Russian spy.

Wright was motivated by the fear that "moles breed", meaning that any long-term Soviet agent in MI5 must have been pressured by Moscow to help insert others who would continue the treachery after he—or she—leaves the service. He suspects that Michael Bettaney, the MI5 counter-espionage officer recently convicted of contacting the KGB, could have been such a new-generation mole. Dismissive statements that Wright's allegations are old and of no current consequence are wrong.

WRIGHT'S DOCUMENT *has been studied by the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robert Armstrong, and the current MI5 management headed by Sir John Jones. Yet it has produced no public response and all that has happened in private is a determined struggle to prevent any real inquiry and to suppress all demands for any improvement to the security and intelligence services.*

The Government persists in its belief that previous improvements to security are working well—even though since making that confident statement to Parliament two years ago Mrs Thatcher has been faced with the cases of Geoffrey Prime at GCHQ and Bettaney in MI5.

Those MPs who normally latch on to any security breach or hint of incompetence have been strangely silent while making every effort to capitalize on the far less serious instances of civil servants allegedly leaking documents to newspapers. Some have been urged to wait at least until the Security Commission's report on Bettaney provides a "natural" reason for asking parliamentary questions. In accepting this advice they seem to have forgotten that when the Prime Minister reported on the Commission's last inquiry into security precautions in 1981, following disclosures in my book, "Their Trade is Treachery", she chose a moment when discussion was bound to be stifled — in the middle of the Falklands conflict.

Sir Anthony Kershaw, chairman of Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, to whom Wright's document was first sent, went on record as saying that he would require a statement when Parliament reassembled. He has failed to secure one and is unlikely to do so.

FORMER **MI5 officers who share Wright's fears and have been pressing hard for action in Whitehall and Westminster have been muted by the threat of prosecution under the Official Secrets Act if they try to force the issue by following his lead. They have been told that any inquiry at the moment would be "extremely damaging to MI5's morale". What damage do the authorities have in mind? Is it the distasteful necessity of questioning very senior officers, past and present, about their support for Hollis and other suspected Soviet agents such as his former deputy, Graham Mitchell?**

WRIGHT'S DOCUMENT *is galling for the Prime Minister's security advisers, for it is first-hand confirmation of many of the facts in "Their Trade is Treachery" which they urged Mrs Thatcher to ridicule in a parliamentary statement on the book. As I have confessed in a newly published book, called "Too Secret Too Long", almost all the information in "Their Trade is Treachery" was given to me on the initiative of former secret service officers because they are so deeply perturbed by the danger of continuing Soviet penetration.*

The second book contains a great deal of new evidence about Soviet penetration previously unknown either to Wright or to MI5 and urges an early warning system for detecting incompetence and disloyalty in the secret service. Though two months have passed since it was published, the only dogs which have barked, among many which could have been expected to give tongue, are those guaranteed to "rubbish" it.

The silence of aggrieved security and intelligence officers is understandable since, unlike Wright, who lives in Australia from which he cannot be extradited under the Official Secrets Act, they are vulnerable to prosecution. But why are MPs, including those of the Opposition, so muted?

THERE IS A TRADITION **that issues of national security and intelligence are not normally discussed in Parliament and the Whips are required to do all they can to preserve it. But the silence of MPs on the Wright disclosures and on the urgent need for some independent supervision of the secret services is doing the nation a serious disservice, for moles do more than burrow and breed. Eventually they surface, and another serious spy scandal, which is inevitable if the defences are not strengthened and effectively monitored, would inflict far more damage on MI5's morale than any inquiry.**

Chapman Pincher
in THE TIMES (*London*)

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security on the one hand and the freedom of the individual on the other. The balance between these two is not for a Court of law. It is for the Home Secretary. He is the person entrusted by Parliament with the task."

The task is a delicate one. Let us take an example that is hypothetical, but in some degree topical.

A dock strike is called, for reasons that seem to many people inadequate, at a time when a NATO exercise, requiring use of the docks, is due to take place. To what extent, if any, would the Government of the day be justified in mounting an investigation, overt or covert, into the possibility that the instigators of the strike had been subject to foreign influence, for example through an injection of funds that could be used to pay mobile pickets, agitators, and others? In such a case, conflict between the rights of a trade union and the demands of national security could hardly be avoided. The case would also illustrate very cogently the danger of politicisation.

If we take the word "Intelligence", we run into more problems. If we interpret it too narrowly, as relating only to the collection and analysis of information bearing on national security, we exclude a range of covert activities designed to frustrate "the knavish tricks" of those who wish to subvert our democratic system. Counter-espionage may require some penetration of an opposing Secret Service. There is also the treacherous ground occupied by "front" organisations, which appear to be pursuing legitimate aims, but are being used as a "stalking-horse" by more sinister forces. Is it an acceptable element of Intelligence to try to neutralise such organisations? Some restraints on covert action in our own defence are clearly required; but if we tie the knot too tightly we strangle our own defenders. In the Channel 4 programme Miss Cathy Massiter, formerly of MI5, confirmed that agents had been infiltrated into organisations that are not commonly regarded as "fronts" for Communism. The subsequent cries of outrage strike one as naive. If, as one must assume, an organisation like CND is a *KGB* target, is it not legitimate for MI5 to satisfy themselves whether or not the *KGB* have succeeded in infiltrating it?

THE CONCEPT OF SECRECY also needs elucidation. We can all agree that an Intelligence Service must be guarded by secrecy against hostile penetration. But problems arise when it seeks to preserve secrecy in the face of responsible authorities, who have a right to enquire into all other fields of executive activity. A special difficulty here concerns the House of Commons, at a time when almost all traces of a bipartisan approach to national defence have disappeared. I have mentioned the investigative and regulative function of the US Senate in relation to Intelligence; but we do well to remember that in the USA both major parties share a common aim of maintaining the existing free-enterprise system and a high level of national defence. It is by no means clear that a similar claim, that would include the left wing of the Labour Party, could be made in Britain.

In 1983 the Labour Party's National Executive Committee (NEC) produced a report entitled "Freedom and the Security Services." It was singularly ill-informed. On the strength of this report, the Party undertook in its Election Manifesto to set up a Parliamentary Select Committee to monitor the work of these Services. This project might have attracted more support if it had been coupled with an undertaking to safeguard the Party itself against subversion and infiltration by the Far Left. The NEC has made an half-hearted attempt to limit the damage caused by *Militant,* but these efforts will inspire little confidence if the NEC fails to reimpose the controls that once operated, such as making membership of the Party incompatible with adherence to the more notorious Communist "front" organisations. We should also bear in mind that in 1966 Harold Wilson assured the House of Commons that all its Members were exempt from all forms of surveillance. There is thus no means of ensuring that all Members of a parliamentary body intended to supervise those responsible for state security, are themselves secure!

A better form of supervision might be that provided by a Select Committee of Privy Councillors, such as that set up under Lord Franks to review the invasion of the Falklands Islands. To such a committee an expert adviser could be attached in the person of a former Permanent Under-Secretary of State of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

It is not only the supervision of the Secret Services that has surfaced lately; the whole question of Civil Service loyalty has been raised by the Ponting case. Successive governments have since 1911 relied on the broadsword of Section Two of the Official Secrets Act to screen their deliberations; but this weapon was blunted in February this year by a jury's decision to acquit Clive Ponting. His case ventilated the crucial issue: to whom do Civil Servants owe loyalty? Mr Justice McCowan believed that they owe it to the Government of the day. *The Times* retorted ponderously: "The sovereign state of Britain is the Crown in Parliament" (leader, 25 February). This merely confused the discussion, which was not about constitutional theory, but about how to carry on the work of government, which would soon become impossible if every disaffected Civil Servant were free to communicate with every disaffected MP. It is significant that Mr Ponting did not convey his strictures on his Minister to the chairman of the appropriate Parliamentary Committee, nor even to his constituency MP; he selected Tam Dalyell as the MP most likely to maximise the nuisance. This makes Mr Ponting a very unusual champion of parliamentary rights. Whatever his motives may have been, loyalty to the Crown in Parliament cannot have ranked very high among them.

Much of the dissatisfaction with the Secret and Security Services, giving rise to demands for better supervision, derives from the disclosure that they have harboured "moles", who should never have been recruited in the first place. To deal with this criticism, various proposals have been made to tighten up the procedure known as "positive vetting." Originally this consisted of nothing more than the requirement that a candidate should provide the names of two referees, who could vouch for his or her respectability. The inadequacy of this practice was amply demonstrated in the case of John Vassall (who was convicted in 1962 of having spied for the USSR after a homosexual incident in Moscow had provided grounds for blackmail). When enquiry was made, it was found that his referees had been two ladies, whose own respectability would

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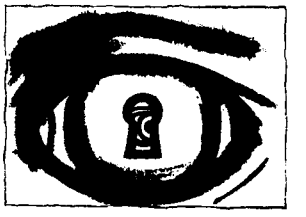
have preserved them from all knowledge of Vassall's proclivities. Procedures were then improved, but still remained of doubtful value. One of those who had his doubts was Sir Maurice Oldfield, a former "C", or head of SIS. His biographer relates that when Sir Maurice was in the Far East he studied Chinese astrology and concluded that, for character assessment, it was quite as good as positive vetting as then applied.[2]

To make the loyalty test more searching, use of the polygraph or "lie detector" has been recommended. It is argued by some that it would be impossible by this kind of test to detect a person hardened in deceit. On the other hand, its use could well act as a deterrent against a young entrant seeking from dishonest motives to embark on a career in one of the Secret Services. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the matter, the instant opposition of certain trade-unionists, with their cries about "McCarthyism", did little to persuade an impartial observer that they wished to cooperate in making Security more secure.

Faced with the human problems connected with recruitment into these Services, in order to maintain their present strength, there are some who would dispense altogether with an Intelligence Service of the traditional pattern and rely entirely upon signals intelligence (SIGINT), spy satellites, and other marvels of technology. We should be ill-advised to follow their lead. Neither SIGINT nor satellite gave any warning of the invasion of the Falklands Islands. In any case, the best intelligence has always been obtained by carefully collating items derived from as many different sources as possible. (It was, incidentally, in this field that Kim Philby excelled during the legitimate aspects of his wartime career.) Professor F. H. Hinsley has written of SIGINT: "If always incontestable, it is also always incomplete."[3] Signals are like messages passing between close friends; they contain abbreviations, discreet allusions, nicknames, and the like. It was learnt from a decrypted Soviet telegram that in 1945 there had been a spy, code-named "*Homer*", in the British Embassy in Washington. It was not until 1951 that he was finally identified as Donald Maclean. The identification was not made through SIGINT (the Russians seldom make the same mistake twice); it resulted from painstaking elimination of the other candidates.

Spy disclosures raise in acute form delicate questions of the relationship between Secret Services and the mass media. Press and TV, manifestly, have their duty to the public; but if they pry too deeply they can end up doing the work of a hostile Intelligence Service for nothing. The task of a hostile Service is not only to detect our plans and projects, but also to weaken our capacity to carry them out by discrediting our own Services. The Fifth Directorate of the GRU (Soviet Military Intelligence) is highly skilled in this work of "disinformation." Each exaggerated (or unfounded) allegation against our British Services tends to promote dissension within them and weaken their standing with their NATO colleagues. The technique is analogous to that used to destabilise law and order by constantly accusing judges of "class prejudice" and the police of "racism" and "brutality." None of this means that scandals should be hushed up, or that enquiries should be fudged; but it does mean that journalists should act responsibly—not in the spirit of the small boy who flings a stone into a bee-hive to see what will fly out. There must have been many among those watching the Channel 4 TV programme in March who felt that the producers' primary aim was to attack MI5, rather than to draw attention in a

Tapping Wires



THERE *are two separate questions raised by the present uproar about MI5's wire tapping of "subversives", though the Left are working hard to confuse the two. The first is whether rules or laws have been broken by the security services. If such offences have been committed, those responsible should be disciplined, dismissed or prosecuted.*

So much for the first question.

THE SECOND **is more important. There have been claims that certain individuals and organizations have been kept under observation, and that this would be wrong *even if the rules had been obeyed*. It has, for instance, been suggested that some of the leaders of the National Union of Mineworkers have been under surveillance, and that this very fact constitutes a scandal.**

Oh yes? The NUM has taken money from the Soviet authorities, and actually solicited it from Gadaffi; I would be very disturbed indeed to learn that the security services of my country had **not**, *in such circumstances, kept proper watch on those responsible. I have no evidence, and do not suggest, that anyone in the NUM leadership has broken any law in the course of those dealings; but if people who accept money, or go begging for it, from the hands of enemy powers and murderers are not to be watched, it is difficult to think of anybody who should be.*

OR TAKE **CND itself. I have no doubt that *most* of its members work for it only because they see in it the best hope of preserving the peace of the world. I have equally no doubt that *some* of them work for it because they see in it the best hope of turning this country into part of the Soviet empire. Since there is only one CND badge, which is available to all members, rather than two which would distinguish between the categories I have listed, it is very important indeed that somebody, somewhere, should be trying to keep a list of the second; that seems to be a job for the security services, if the security services have any function at all.**

I DO NOT KNOW *whether any members of the security services have exceeded their powers; if they have, action should be taken to deal with them and to ensure that there are no such excesses in the future. If that is what the banned ITV film says, I have no quarrel with it.*

But if it rejects and denounces the very surveillance, under lawful authority and proper safeguards, of individuals, or organizations which harbour individuals, whose sympathies and activities give reasonable cause for suspicion of being a danger to this country's security, then I am quite unable to accept that argument, and hope that the Government will stand firm against it.

Bernard Levin
in THE TIMES (*London*)

[2] *"C": A Biography of Sir Maurice Oldfield.* BY RICHARD DEACON. Macdonald, £9.95.

[3] F. H. Hinsley et al., *British Intelligence in the Second World War* (HMSO, 1979), Vol. I, p.55.

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balanced way to an awkward problem of state security, where abuse could all too easily creep in.

IT FOLLOWS FROM ALL THIS that there is a pressing need for informed debate on all these complex and difficult issues; but it is a debate that requires to be conducted in good faith by those who wish to reach sensible conclusions. Those who merely want to drive discussion into a series of blind alleys should, if possible, be ignored; if not, excluded. Just as there are those who so mistrust nuclear weapons that they pretend these can be disinvented, so there are some so hostile to secrecy and to Secret Services that they would like to abolish both. In a perfect world, freedom of information would have no bounds; in the world that we inhabit it is a question of striking the right balance. If the debate is to get off to a good start, instead of being just another round of sensational "revelations" about the Intelligence community, it would be highly desirable (if, perhaps, improbable) that the British Government should launch it with a White Paper. Even if this does not occur, there are numbers of well-informed academics and journalists who could make useful contributions.

The cooperation of all sensible men is needed if the legacy of excessive secrecy and excessive speculation is to be dispelled in a constructive manner. Ignorance has always been the ally of rumour and prejudice. We have had quite enough of both.

A Polish Murder Trial

London

THE TRIAL OF *the murderers of the Polish pro-*Solidarity *priest, Jerzy Popieluszko, ended in Torun, with the four accused members of the Security Police escaping the death sentence; each was given a long jail sentence instead. But, as the London "Times", and indeed the public in Poland, reflected, "no one can know how long the convicted men will actually serve." "The Times" added that "the trial has raised more questions than it answered about the background to the murder. . . ."*

In the first place it raised the question of its significance. It was not a judicial trial, although the official propaganda tried hard to create the impression that it was an example of the régime's "due process of law." At the beginning of the trial, "Trybuna Ludu" wrote that the law applies equally to everybody; and at its end the public prosecutor (Leszek Pietrasinski) emphasised again its thoroughly legal character in line with the entire nature of General Jaruzelski's administration.

THE PURPOSE OF **a judicial trial is to discover, through legal procedure, the truth about a crime and to administer justice in the light of it. It is, however, obvious that the purpose of the Torun trial was precisely the opposite: to obfuscate the truth about the crime, while trying to create the impression of a bona fide search for justice. This is evident from the conduct of the judges, the prosecutors, and the lawyers for the accused. The Chief Judge (Artur Kujawa) admonished the defendants when they strayed from the line imposed by him arbitrarily; he silenced the lawyers representing the Popieluszko family: and, in general, he behaved like somebody executing a pre-set scenario, rather than an officer of law trying objectively to establish facts about the case. In their concluding speeches, the public prosecutors—while quite hypocritically stressing that it was not their function to assess the policy of the state—produced a long political eulogy of the judicial virtues of the régime; attacked the Catholic Church; and equated "the extremism" of Father Popieluszko with that of his murderers. The Prosecutor (Pietrasinski) maintained that the accused did not act from "base motives" (hardly the role of a prosecutor in a murder trial).**

On the other hand, the lawyers of the accused were strangely silent and ineffective, while those of the Popieluszko family were hindered by the judges in obvious ways.

There can be no doubt about the political rather than judicial nature of the trial. Although unprecedented in some respects in Communist history, it was also organised to achieve a political purpose. Like the Moscow "Show Trials" in the 1930s and similar trials in post-War Eastern Europe in the 1940s, the Torun trial was given special publicity in the media, although I think it doubtful whether it was effective; was possibly even counter-productive.

The difference is that this time the accused confessed to a crime they had really committed!

The "revelations" about how the brutal security police operated might have impressed Western correspondents, but were hardly news to the Polish public. And, after all, some of the crimes to which Stalin's political police chief, Yagoda, confessed (at his 1937 Moscow trial) he just might have actually committed. In neither case do we know who-was-doing-what "at the higher level." But at least the totalitarian surrealism of the previous Communist trials has been replaced by the limited political demonstration of "legality." In the old judicial "theatre of the absurd" the defendants were blackened by the Communist prosecution and even by the defence. In the legal farce of Torun they were whitewashed, even by the prosecution—which is, undoubtedly a kind of progress, but not necessarily in legal constitutional terms.

The attempt to "square the circle", to have a semblance of legal procedure while pursuing an extra-legal political purpose, inevitably resulted in a farrago of ambiguities and inconsistencies. It prevented the clarification of the real motives of the crime and the pursuit of its real instigators (i.e. above the level of Colonel Pietruszka).

BEFORE THE TRIAL, *the Government spokesman (Jerzy Urban) talked about a possible plot against it. In his concluding speech at the Torun trial, the Prosecutor referred to some mysterious "conspiracy within conspiracy"—only to stress emphatically that nobody "above" or "at a higher level" was at all implicated in the crime. This glaring inconsistency is sufficient to undermine the judicial pretences of the Torun trial. Who were the other conspirators?*

The tight-rope act was to satisfy a number of contradictory political considerations. There was the need to assuage Polish public opinion incensed by the martydom of Father Popieluszko; the need not to undermine the shaken morale of the Secret Police (particularly through death sentences); the need not to provoke the Soviet "godfathers"; and the need to impress the West with legal propriety. Unfortunately, all these considerations were in conflict; they pulled in different directions; and how could they really be reconciled?

WHEN IS A SHOW TRIAL **not a show trial? When what it shows is not worth showing; and it is the public, not the criminals, which is being sorely tried.**

Leopold Labedz

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Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Yalta Demythified

IF GOD HAD WANTED to outdo Pirandello, He succeeded perfectly when He produced the new, planetary version of *Each in His Own Way*, better known as the Yalta Conference. During the 40 years that have elapsed since Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin met on 4-11 February 1945, each part of the world has cherished its own version of what was agreed, conceded, or withheld during the course of their talks.

There is, first, the Western view—or that which the West has resigned itself to accepting. In that interpretation, Yalta established more or less satisfactorily a new international balance, a division of the main victors' "spheres of influence", which no doubt favoured the USSR but at least provided stability.

Within that version of events can be discerned a tougher, French interpretation, championed by General de Gaulle. For him, Yalta began the "*politique des blocs*", which without consultation or by-your-leave aligned into two camps those countries not invited to Yalta, including France. The Western interpretation long deterred the United States and democratic Western Europe from questioning the Soviet hold on central Europe. The Gaullist thesis further affirmed that France saw the two Superpowers as virtually equivalent, and rejected their "condominium." At Yalta, that is, the West was held both to have conceded too much to the USSR and to have established undesirable blocs.

Then there is the Soviet view of affairs. The conclusion that Stalin drew from Yalta was that the United States had accepted his preponderance in Europe—the whole of Europe, including the West. In his eyes, it had agreed that those countries from which the Red Army had ousted the Nazis were to be Sovietised. This implied that the other countries of continental Europe would also fall under Soviet influence, if not the Soviet system, pending more. At Yalta, after all, Roosevelt had explicitly promised that American troops would go home within two years after the end of the War. That was more than a hint. And Great Britain, which Stalin rightly foresaw would be weaker, and absorbed by the problems of its Empire, would not be able by itself to counterbalance the Continental might of the Soviet Union.

It is therefore understandable that the first signs of resistance to Soviet hegemony—the Marshall Plan, and European efforts to regain US military protection—gave Stalin the impression that America had broken its promise no longer to involve itself in the affairs of the Old Continent, and had robbed the USSR of the fruits of victory. Hence his vigorous reactions: the Prague coup and the Berlin blockade of 1948. For the Soviet leadership post-War setbacks unduly limited the Westward expansion it had hoped for.

FINALLY, THERE IS the view of Yalta formed and retained by those peoples in Europe which remain under Soviet control. For them, there is no doubt: the West, at Yalta, "sold" them, gaining tranquillity at the expense of central Europe being enslaved. At no time did the peoples who were "liberated" by the Red Army have the chance democratically to choose their destiny, their social system, their form of government, or their allies.

The countries of the Atlantic community have grown accustomed to a régime in which it seems normal that some 135 million Eastern Europeans are kept in a state of inferiority—without citizenship, without civil rights, without individual and cultural freedom: a vast *apartheid* in the heart of Europe. An *apartheid* absolutely contrary to the Atlantic Charter in which, on 14 August 1941, the Allies set out their War Aims: the re-establishment of national sovereignty and democracy in all the countries at war, including Germany's former allies, Germany herself, and Japan. The War was a war against totalitarianism: it could have no other objective than to establish or restore democracy. Hence the sense of "betrayal" felt in central Europe.

How much truth is there in each of these views of Yalta? To understand the context and *raison d'être* of the conference, two essential factors need to be recalled.

First, the military situation. It was clear by the end of 1944 that the Red Army was going to occupy Europe as far as Vienna and Berlin. So the fate of a large part of the Continent was going to depend on Stalin. This added weight to the second factor: the intentions of the USSR. When on 22 June 1941, Hitler turned against his Soviet ally, forcing it willy-nilly into the camp of the anti-Nazi belligerents, Stalin soon set about persuading his new allies to confirm the territorial annexations which his former ally had granted him. From its collaboration with Hitlerite Germany, the USSR had obtained the three Baltic states, part of Finland, 47% of Poland, Bukovina, and Bessarabia. From 1941 onwards, Stalin pressed the British and Americans to honour, in substance, the promises he had had from Hitler.

He gradually succeeded. But Poland was the key. Poland had been the first country invaded by the *Wehrmacht*, the first to fight, and the only one to remain at Britain's side during the year of tragic solitude which followed the fall of France.

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The Polish Government-in-exile in London had carried on the war. Many Polish airmen had given their lives in the Battle of Britain, which saved the West in the summer of 1940. While the Allies parleyed at Yalta, 150,000 Polish soldiers and their officers were among the troops in Italy, driving back the Nazi armies.

In these circumstances it seemed inconceivable that one of the Allies, the USSR, should obtain from the two others, Great Britain and the United States, permission to annexe half the territory of a fourth, Poland, which had earned at such a price its right to a place among the victors. Poland's moral credentials were far better than those of the Soviet Union: it had never collaborated with the Nazis. And yet, at Yalta, Stalin pulled off this inconceivable coup.

Nor was he content to annexe Eastern Poland. In the rest of Poland, supposedly independent, he was able to install a government of his own stripe—the so-called "Lublin" committee, composed of Stalinist *apparatchiks*. The Allies soon recognised it—preceded by de Gaulle, during his Moscow visit in December 1944. They spurned the legitimate Government-in-Exile in London, which had led the war and the Resistance since 1939. True, it was stipulated at Yalta that there were to be "free elections" in what remained of Poland. But it was also agreed to allow Stalin to supervise them, to the exclusion of British or American observers. So the stipulation was a cruel black comedy. The free elections never took place—especially since Stalin had never had any illusion about what such elections would produce. During the summer of 1945, at Potsdam, he calmly told an American expert: "*Any Government freely elected would be anti-Soviet, and that we cannot allow.*"[1] Such candour is heartwarming.

That was the first of Stalin's principles. The second he confided to Djilas: "*Whoever occupies a territory imposes on it his own social system.*"[2] This remark dates from April 1945, shortly after Yalta, when Stalin was already applying the principle energetically to the Romanians, and was soon to do so to the Hungarians and several other future "great friends."

In short, Stalin was pursuing a three-stage plan: the annexation by the Soviet Union of a vast area stretching from the Baltic to the Danube basin; the forcible installation in Central Europe of governments formally independent but in reality satellites of Moscow; and the establishment of Soviet preponderance in Western Europe, thanks to the promise that the Americans would not interfere. Only the third part of the plan, so far, has failed.

THIS BRIEF HISTORICAL RETROSPECT shows that the theory whereby the Superpowers shared out their spheres of influence is nothing but unwisdom after the event. At Yalta and afterwards, the British and the Americans simply lacked the ability to prevent Stalin implementing the two first stages of his plan. Of course, he found it all the easier because Westerners, and especially Americans, were disastrously ignorant of the Soviet system. All Washington's competent experts on the USSR were left out of the team at Yalta, with the sole exception of Charles Bohlen; but he was confined to the role of interpreter. The Soviets, moreover, had a "mole" in the US delegation, who kept them informed of all that was said. Even so, Western unpreparedness apart, the balance of forces on the ground made it impossible for the democracies to do much more than try to contain the absorption of Europe by the USSR. They did their best; but their best was not very good. At all events they neither did nor attempted anything else. They did not join in: they bit on the bullet.

Because for forty years the peoples of Central Europe have continued to demonstrate that they refuse Soviet domination, there is talk of "getting out of Yalta", *sortir de Yalta* (as President Mitterrand puts it) or "abrogating Yalta" (as Vice-President Bush would prefer). To tell the truth, the question does not arise in these terms, for the simple reason that there is nothing to abrogate. There never were any Yalta agreements: the Yalta meeting was only an exchange of views. Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin went there, not as contracting parties or representatives of their respective States, but for intergovernmental consultations. The talks produced a simple communiqué, not a Treaty. If there had been a Treaty, the American Senate would have had to ratify it to make it valid; and this it was not even requested to do.

Little by little, however, the Yalta myth took shape. It became a habit to refer to Yalta as a sort of Treaty, bringing it into the category in which jurists classify "*international texts of uncertain character.*"[3] In reality, the West today has no need to feel bound in any way by Yalta, which was in no respect a contract. Yalta inaugurated or perpetuated the reign of force in central Europe, not the rule of law.

[1] Philip Mosely, *The Kremlin and World Politics* (1960).
[2] Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (1963).
[3] Krystyna Marek, "Retour sur Yalta", *Revue générale de droit international public* (July-September 1982).

Terror Watch*

IT'S A CHALLENGING question: is it possible to anticipate the terrorist threat? One French writer on the subject claims that it is, and in any case he apparently proved it in a previous book, *Terrorisme: maintenant la France?*, which was published in 1982, just before the start of the wave of terrorist attacks which broke out in this country. Alas, it is sadly true that the French authorities make little use of the potential of "preventive analysis." A few days' heavy policing in an area where an attack has just taken place is merely a face-saving exercise.

In order to fight terrorism successfully, you first have to

* See Jean-François Revel, "Paris Notebook", "Terrorism, & No End" (ENCOUNTER, February 1985).

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study the origins, the ideology, and the peculiar psychology of each group. That is what Xavier Raufer does with scholarly precision.[1] Generally speaking, there are two basic models for terrorism in the West, the Separatist/regionalist, and the Revolutionary. The former are motivated, as their name suggests, by aims of local independence, the latter by sheer ideology. That is the case with the "*Organisations communistes combattantes*" whose "theoretical" jargon comes straight out of Marxism-Leninism—the *Brigati Rossi*, the German *Röte Armee Fraktion*, the Spanish *Grapo*, the Belgian *Cellules communistes combattantes* (*CCC*), the Portuguese *FP 25* movement, and in France, *Action directe*.

The two currents often collaborate for specific purposes; but even the Separatists nearly always adopt some sort of revolutionary communist ideology. A scrutiny of *ETA's* literature shows how the Basque component is combined with the classical "anti-imperialist" and "anti-capitalist" rhetoric. The phraseology of the *FLNKS* (*Front de Libération Nationale Kanuk Socialiste*) sounds much the same.

How international is terrorism? To what extent do states use it against other states? If Xavier Raufer is right to dismiss the simplistic idea of a single terrorist leadership, nevertheless he recognises that no terrorist group can survive for long without outside support. He notes that the killers of *Action directe*

> "have benefited from a massive input of technologies from Italian urban guerrilla groups enjoying political asylum in France—the selfsame people who had sworn not to engage in politics in their host country. . . ."

Every terrorist group needs arms, money, training camps, instructors, fallback zones and false papers. Without these it must soon run down. Even without any systematic original plan, the foreign Intelligence Services which manipulate these puppets reached a point of coordination after the first few years. The recent events would not have been possible otherwise. An operation like the murder of General Audran in Paris on 25 January requires: (*1*) an operational HQ outside the country but nearby; (*2*) a team to locate and keep watch on the target; (*3*) a separate hit team which will filter into the country in dispersed order and leave immediately after the attack; (*4*) a logistical team on the spot, which supplies the active team with weapons, vehicles, lodgings and false passports—one for entry to the country, and a different one for departure.

This kind of meticulous preparation and split-second execution is beyond the reach of a bunch of hoodlums, no matter how drunk on ideology. We must face the fact that present-day terrorism is *une forme de guerre*. The assassinations of Audran and of Ernst Zimmermann in Munich on 1 February belong to a series of recent attacks aimed at persons and installations attached to the NATO system of European defence, whether in Greece, West Germany, Belgium or Portugal. As for France, it is said that the "message" is to punish François Mitterrand for his stand in favour of Euro-missiles.

To be sure, terrorist violence is also an ideologised form of ordinary daily delinquency, expressing hatred for a society held to be inherently criminal. I think the explanation in terms of social unrest ought never to be ignored. Yet how could it account for the paradox that it is in the least unbearable societies that most terrorist actions occur? For the last fifteen years, some *two thirds* of the world's recorded acts of terrorism have been perpetrated in Western Europe. Isn't that a curious fact? Most bizarre, I would say.

[1] *Terrorisme, violence*. By XAVIER RAUFER. J.-J. Pauvert & Editions Carrière.

Liberalism's War on Two Fronts

COULD IT BE that "liberalism" is what emerges when all else has failed? Is that why it arouses such hostility? Its mere appearance stands for the failure of certain grand and complete systems of thought, revolutionary or reactionary. It signals the moment at which plans for reconstructing or for controlling all of society come up against public disappointment and then active mistrust.

That is why liberals fight, or rather are attacked, on two fronts. As early as 1815, which is more or less the date when the word "*libéral*" acquired its present meaning and became current in the language of politics, we find an intellectual like Benjamin Constant criticising the 18th-century *philosophes* on the ground that they are too ready, in the name of liberty, to compel society to fit the mould they have fabricated for it. But under the *Restauration* we also find him inveighing against an "*Ultra*" bill restricting the freedom of the press. Similarly Tocqueville, after the fall of Louis-Philippe, and as a member of the committee appointed to draw up the republican Constitution of 1848, observed that during its deliberations both *la droite* and *la gauche* always managed to agree on at least one thing—extending the powers of the State at the expense of the citizen's margin of initiative.

Even now, the Left is still mistaken in supposing that it is the sole target of the neo-liberal wave: the *dirigiste* Right and "progressive" liberalism (with its penchant for organising things from the top downwards) are likewise targets. In the same way, the liberal thinkers of the 19th century attacked the *ancien régime* just as much as they did the *Révolution*. Those who still longed for the former failed to understand the century's great aspiration towards equal opportunity and individual liberty. The acolytes of Revolution failed to give due weight to the tragic defects of a philosophy which had led to the dictatorship of the Committee of Public Safety, the Terror, and Napoleonic despotism.

So it seems to me that it is possible to dispute the

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"periodisation" (as the historians call it) of a new French book,[1] which extends, so the subtitle says, "from the crisis of Absolutism to the Constitution of 1875." For with the end of the Empire came an essential break in French political thought. The century of the Enlightenment, which defined itself by opposition to the old order, combined two currents without realising that these were later to come into conflict in their turn. It combined what was to become the liberal current with what would become the socialist, even (as J. L. Talmon once called it) the "democratic totalitarian" current. Rousseau's "*Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles*" almost rivals the programme for cultural indoctrination later to be instituted by Chiang Ch'ing, alias Mme Mao. And the good Abbé Mably, had he had the power, would, I am afraid, have made a very passable Pol Pot. This school has next to nothing in common with the genuine liberalism of Montesquieu, who in any case was ferociously attacked by the "totalitarian" Helvétius (and, in our own day, by Louis Althusser).

A certain vagueness in its overall scheme is also present in another new book,[2] which warns us that "liberty transcends all definition" and that "liberty always surpasses liberalism" without taking the trouble to explain the nature of the transcendence and the surpassing that he has in mind. But still, as his title suggests, Louis Girard is concerned here with individuals, not with liberalism itself. The author is inviting us on a pleasant scenic walk, with no steep ups-and-downs, rather than on a theoretical exploration.

Yet why not? The history of liberalism deserves to be approached first of all like a portrait gallery, and André Jardin's is particularly broad and comprehensive, enabling the visitor to inspect the detail of a history in which it is impossible to separate the life of ideas from political life and from the lives of individuals. Most of the great French liberals were also distinguished as writers, journalists, historians, philosophers and political figures, often at the highest level. In all these fields, Benjamin Constant, Adolphe Thiers, François Guizot, Alexis de Tocqueville, Pierre Royer-Collard, the Comte de Montalembert and Albert de Broglie occupy the first or second rank. Liberalism traces its origins to an illustrious founder (or, should one say, foundress), Mme de Staël, whose last book, *Considérations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution française* (1818), published a year after her death, puts the fundamental problem of the age: how to conserve the gains of the Revolution, which is to say the defeat of the reactionary old order of things, while at the same time preserving liberty, which also means not relapsing into Robespierrist tyranny. Liberalism possessed some of the most influential editorialists of the time, from Charles de Rémusat and Armand Carrel to Prévost-Paradol, and the most widely read newspapers—*Le Constitutionnel, Le Globe, Le National, Le Siècle*. It inspired the most respected and international of all journals, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. It even had, in Béranger, its own bard, the *dieu des salons* and the idol of cottage and tavern.

Of course, the liberal era in France is dominated by two thinkers, Benjamin Constant and Alexis de Tocqueville, to whom we should add a third, François Guizot, now surfacing from a period of long and underserved discredit. But since these books are meant to be narrative rather than theoretical, this is not the place to attempt a doctrinal account of liberalism.

All the same, I want to add two regrets about the method followed by both writers. I do not believe it possible to write the history of political liberalism in isolation from that of economic liberalism. True, André Jardin talks briefly about Jean-Baptiste Say, but he does not mention the phenomenal Frédéric Bastiat (1801-50), whose lively, sturdy, witty, topical and persuasive talents compel me to recommend making his instant acquaintance.[3] Furthermore, I do not believe it possible to separate the history of liberalism in France from the international context, whether in the shape of the American *Federalist Papers* or that of the English school, and in particular of a thinker of the stature and influence of John Stuart Mill.

J.-F.R.

[1] *Histoire du libéralisme politique*. By André Jardin. Hachette.
[2] *Les Libéraux français*. By Louis Girard. Aubier.
[3] See the recently published selection, *Oeuvres économiques* (Florin Aftalion).

After Drouth

Lately, he wrote again,
Struggling from long drouth,
Not lines of sour old age—
He'd written them in youth—
Not runes to outface death,
Not lust's declining rage—
No, not a word of these:
Small songs, he wrote, the breath
A child makes on cold glass
Before bedtime, turned plain
And marvellous by frost.

John Loveday

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Interpreting the Past

Reflections of an Historical Novelist—By JOAN AIKEN

WHAT CAN WE DO with the past, that marvellous lumber-room of unused treasures? We can forget it; we can fantasise about it; we can try to recapture it with fidelity.

Our generation is in danger of forgetting it—and, paradoxically, becoming obsessed by it. Children, in particular, need what it has to offer. As a writer of historical novels for children, I believe that fiction can help.

People write historical fiction from a number of different motives, two of which seem primary. One is a true wish to interpret the past and make it visible, intelligible, coherent. The other is to take refuge from the present in a region where the writer may be secure from interference. A number of writers have been activated by both motives—or, in the course of their work, have moved gradually from one to the other.

Like the subconscious, the past lies all around us; and we ignore it for most of the time. In fact, in so far as the subconscious is the aggregate of all our former wishes, experiences, and frustrations, it could be said that history forms the mass subconscious, the underlying source of all our actions.

Yet our own late-20th-century culture is probably less aware of the past, more separated from it, than any previous epoch. True, we have magnificent, unprecedented opportunities for learning about history, geology, and archaeology: we have X-rays and radio-carbon dating and countless erudite and skilful investigators, aided by computers which can collate the results of their researches far more quickly than any human brain. A small percentage of the population knows an enormous amount about the past—more than was known by anyone except those who lived in the period under study, and in some respects even more than they. But knowledge is not always the same as understanding and feeling.

In "primitive" societies, traditions live on. Peasants in the Indus Valley in present-day Pakistan, for example, make pots, spin, weave, and grind corn exactly as their forebears have done for the past 4,000 years. In the American desert, some tribes of Indians still laboriously collect nuts, bake them, hull them, re-bake the kernels, grind them into paste, and finally cook them into cakes as their ancestors have been doing since the beginning of recorded history.

Most of the industrialised world, by contrast, lives in surroundings that are largely man-made, urban, and brand-new. Many of us give hardly a thought to the past. We are not reminded of it by ancient buildings, family heirlooms or ceremonies, group traditions, domestic or local practices, religious or social rituals, or immemorial landscapes with their trackways and fortifications and boundary marks. Most of us have little information about our ancestors: who they were, where they came from, how they behaved. That is of antiquarian, not practical importance. We don't go into trances and consult them in times of trouble, or look up records to discover how they might have acted in a crisis.

And this is very unnatural. It is the human tendency to imitate one's parent. After the initial rebellion and breakaway in adolescence, most people slowly converge back towards parental habits. As a race, however, as a civilisation, we are hardly able to imitate the habits of our predecessors—partly because we are ignorant of them. There is no oral tradition to remind us; and there is a very broad and deep technical gulf.

When Shakespeare wrote *Julius Caesar*, he was portraying a way of life not wholly remote from that of the Elizabethan age. There were climatic differences between Rome and England; the Romans wore togas, not ruffs and doublets. But the Elizabethan audience could envisage Caesar as easily as it could the Merchant of Venice. Both Romans and Elizabethans travelled on horseback or by sailing-ship; they fought their battles mainly with swords, bows and arrows, and spears; they dressed in wool, linen, and fur; they cooked over wood fires; they wrote with quills; they believed in astrology; they used candles or oil lamps if they worked at night. From 55 BC to 1564 AD—one thousand, six hundred and nineteen years—the circumstances of life changed at a very moderate pace. Add only another four hundred years, and the graph of human discovery has suddenly shot straight upwards. Electricity has arrived: so have radio, television, the telephone, computers, air travel, electronics, and the

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thermonuclear bomb.

The past has been snatched away. Our daily habits now are the product of this century, or even of this generation. Fashions in living, art, clothes, eating, thinking, medicine, architecture change with such formidable speed that anything two years out of date may seem as archaic as a bygone. "Dated" has become a term of contempt, not veneration. Machines and utensils are obsolete almost as soon as we have learned to use them.

This notably affects our children. Reared in contemporary surroundings, and on visual images—not those they have read or heard and therefore formed for themselves—they are hardly aware that the past exists, unless they see it artificially preserved behind glass or across neatly mown lawns, on a duty visit to Battle Abbey or Hampton Court.

Yet the landscape of the past is huge, and keeps expanding. As our lives proceed, as we plod through jobs and birthdays and relationships, write a book or a few letters, always growing a little older, the past surges forward to encompass more territory, turning our memories into history. World War II is now thoroughly colonised. The Fifties, the Sixties, the Seventies are fixed, glamorised, and designated as historical periods, like listed buildings or nature conservancy areas. The past is growing behind us faster than we can keep up with it. There is more history than we can ever hope to learn.

THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO, in every generation. But I am inclined to think that it is especially true of our own, because we lack routine or ritualistic connections with the past. Like bereaved people who have been allowed no funeral rites, we have become depressed, dispossessed, obsessed. The past we have failed to mourn has returned to haunt us.

Children, in this respect, behave differently from adults. They are less prone to depressions after the death of someone they know or love. Their grief and pain are sharp and overwhelming at the time; but their memories are short and their power of recovery is strong. So, while many adults have an addictive devotion to the past, children may be almost wholly unaware of it.

As adults, we imagine past scenes with intense nostalgia because they have the radiance of unchanging fidelity. They cannot be swept away from us. That convivial lunch party in Hampstead with Wordsworth and Keats, when Charles Lamb got drunk and was so rude to the stamp officer; Cassandra Austen's funeral, when the gusty autumn wind blew beech leaves all over the coffin; the painful, last, silent meeting between those estranged friends, Beau Brummell and the Prince Regent—descriptions of such scenes have wonderful luminosity for us. What scenes from our own time will survive in such lustre? Will there *be* any posterity to contemplate them? Are we the first generation to have wondered that?

Part of the attraction of the past is its safety, its unalterability. It can seem almost cosy, even in its horrors—even the Black Death, the Hundred Years' War, or Buchenwald. It is safe because it is all over now. We know what happened: we can chart it, assess it, turn it into statistics and patterns. It can't get any worse. And even the Spanish Inquisition, the Massacre of St Bartholomew, the Children's Crusade, the Black Hole of Calcutta, the Charge of the Light Brigade, the Amritsar Massacre, or Auschwitz: none is quite so appalling or terrifying as the possibility of a nuclear holocaust.

Could a better contact with the past make us behave more wisely? Education is in part a system of inoculation with history—absorbing small, homoeopathic doses of what former generations have learned, discovered, said, thought, and done. In theory, it should teach us not to repeat our ancestors' mistakes. But there is always room for new mistakes. Can history protect us from one which might be final?

IT CAN AT LEAST give us and our children a sense of context: it can show us where we belong in the pattern, what came before, how everything connects. The main symptom in some forms of mental illness is blankness, a loss of the personal past. If one can't remember, one can't act intelligently, because there is no springboard for future action. Children reared without knowledge of their own family past, their local, social, or historical past—and particularly children reared on television and computers, which cast a blank uncritical eye on certain areas of the present—such children have inadequate resources with which to face the formidable choices ahead of them.

Adults in search of the past in fictional form read Barbara Tuchman, Mary Renault, Ellis Peters (or Edith Pargeter), or Georgette Heyer and her successors. They watch *Pride and Prejudice* on television, or *The Jewel in the Crown.* But few children pursue such a quest. Historical novels, it used to be said, sold less well than other Puffin Books: the only historical figure to whom children seem unfailingly attached is Robin Hood.

How, then, can the past be made palatable to children—if, reared among tower-blocks, they can hardly imagine it; if they have no incentive or stimulus from their day-to-day surroundings; if they can't even look along the High Street and see the Georgian frontages behind the chain-store façades? How can we persuade them that history ever really happened?

One of the few habits we still share with our ancestors is reading. Holding a book, we still behave in much the same way as people have done since the invention of written records. If for no other reason, we should try to make sure that reading does not become a lost art.

To keep children reading, and to encourage their slightest interest in the past, we have to be wily. Mercifully, children do take a natural interest in their own personal history. "What was I like when I was a baby?" they ask. "What did you give me for breakfast? What did I wear?" This self-oriented curiosity about what their environment was like before the present can by strategy be expanded into a general curiosity—about how people drew before pencils were invented, how they kept clean without soap, electricity, or piped water, how they despatched news before the foundation of the post office. Children enjoy such details;

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they also enjoy the discovery that there were periods in the past when adult knowledge was scantier and flimsier than it is now, when adults held beliefs we now know to be fallacious, as that the earth was flat or that trolls lived in the mountains. The logical and hopeful corollary, for children, is that if adults could be so mistaken then, today they need not be infallible.

When I was a child, history was still told in stories. Fair Rosamond, the White Ship, Richard and Blondel: such tales grip the imagination, and stick in the mind long after statistics and dates have slipped away. The teacher's task is to ensure that they encapsulate nuggets of reliable information. The romantic legends in *Our Island Story*, my first history primer, were fairly weak on fact and strong on sentiment; but I was also lucky enough, learning history at home with my mother, to be given two charming little books by Rhoda and Eileen Power, *Boys and Girls of History* and *More Boys and Girls of History*. These described the daily lives of such young people as "Lucius", a Romano-British boy: "Olaf", a Dane; Salathiel Pavy, an Elizabethan boy actor; a little Stuart housewife; and then, travelling overseas, Pocahontas; a New England boy involved in the Boston Tea Party; a Maori boy; and an Aborigine girl. The books not only recounted stirring tales: they gave practical details of food, clothes, lessons, and toys. I remembered them vividly for forty years. In their strength and simplicity, they awakened a lifelong fondness for history.

ONLY FICTION, or truly perceptive biography, can communicate this real appreciation of how the past looked, sounded, felt and smelt. "The peasants lived in squalor" is a flat, unmemorable statement. The reader, and especially a child reader, needs to picture an actual peasant lying down to sleep in a mixture of mud and straw, by the side of his pig.

Contemporary fiction, written during the period it depicts, can be disappointing as an historical source. Those who wrote it neglected the needs of posterity, prying between the lines, puzzling over every nuance: they omitted what their readers took for granted—and what we are longing to know. Jane Austen's novels, despite their domestic setting, contain very little about the details of daily life. We pounce with excitement on the fact that Mary Crawford's harp has to be brought from Northampton in her brother's carriage because during the hay season a farm cart cannot be had. We note that Frank Churchill rides to London to have his hair cut, and secretly buy a piano. We are delighted to see Kitty and Lydia treat their elder sisters to a lunch of "such cold meat as an inn larder usually affords": they borrow money for it, and are busily employed beforehand "dressing a salad and cucumber." What dressing did they use? I have a "Jane Austen" recipe book, but it is dumb on the subject of salad dressings. Charlotte Brontë was better at describing stoves, costumes, domestic interiors, and culinary processes—either because she was consciously reporting for more metropolitan readers or, one might fancy, because she guessed what future generations might be itching to know.

Historical writers now, of course, take immense pains to include all such details. Georgette Heyer's notebooks were

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packed with information about costumes and carriages, 18th-century slang, and the Battle of Waterloo. We are grateful; but one salad and cucumber in *Pride and Prejudice* carries more conviction than all the products of careful research.

We should encourage children to engage in lateral sleuthing: to read *Henry IV, Part II* in order to find out how men-at-arms kept their stockings up; *Lycidas* to discover what were Milton's favourite wild flowers; *Tom Brown's Schooldays* to ponder the embryonic rules of Rugby football; the "Ode to a Skylark" to decide how Shelley must have pronounced many of the words in it, differently from the way they are spoken today. Such odds and ends of fact-finding make one far more attentive—to one's own surroundings as well as to the text. The experience is like hunting through a town for Tudor houses, or through a valley for the old course of a river. The searching eye lights on orchids and milestones and old notices and all kinds of unexpected treasure trove.

When I was a child, my mother and I worked our way through great quantities of Scott, Dumas, Victor Hugo, Charlotte Yonge, Stevenson, and so on. We read *A Tale of Two Cities, Lorna Doone, The Cloister and the Hearth*, Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* and the "Conscript" books by Erkmann-Chatrien. Some of these books, I know now, were good, some so-so, some downright bad: yet I learned a great deal from them. I may never read *Quentin Durward* again, but I remember with pleasure Scott's portrait of Louis XI, disguised for some obscure reason as a merchant, having dinner at a French inn. For good or ill, it fixed in my mind an image of that monarch—canny, crafty, stingy, yet not wholly dislikeable.

Listening to such novels, then reading them myself, I began to notice connections and cross-references. My father owned a 19th-century French history picture-book. The captions might be in French, but the pictures were luridly dramatic. I gazed with eight-year-old fascination at a ladder, laden with horror-struck soldiers, being thrust back from the battlements of a besieged castle; at Napoleon, gloomy among his frostbitten, dying men, on the way back from Moscow; and there again, recognisably, was Louis XI, already familiar from *Quentin Durward* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, this time on his ghastly deathbead, haunted by the ghosts of tortured victims.

Richard Coeur-de-Lion also reappeared—in *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman* and in Robin Hood stories. Charlotte Yonge's Little Duke was the grandfather of William the Conqueror, mentioned in *Puck of Pook's Hill*. The Massacre of St Bartholomew, described in Dumas's *Marguérite de Valois*, was no less terrible in *The Chaplet of Pearls*. Each story illuminated some small patch of history; then things began to dovetail. The lighted areas spread and multiplied, then joined together in series like lamps along a highway. The boy King Edward, visible in Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper*, connected backwards to Henry VIII, and forwards to Queen Elizabeth, as described in *Westward Ho!*. The Spanish Inquisition, which cast an aura over Kingsley's novel, was also a feature of Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum." And, mysteriously, wicked Mademoiselle, the Dauphine in Dumas's *Louise de la Vallière*, was the same person as poor little lame Minette, in Margaret Irwin's *Royal Flush*. So: who

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was right about Mademoiselle? Was she good, or was she bad?

These cross-bearings from novels began to give me, as a child, the confident feeling that history was real: that Scott and Hugo and Dumas were not just inventing. The disparity between rival portraits of Charles II's younger sister made one understand that, although the people in history were solidly there, everyone had a right to an individual view of their motives. Was St Joan a noble, simple, inspired girl, as in Shaw's play? Or a witch, consorting with fiends, as seen by Shakespeare? Was Richard Crookback a monster, as in Shakespeare? Or a shrewd, ruthless, but not unsympathetic young general, as in Stevenson's *The Black Arrow*?

CHILDREN CAN BE a difficult audience—especially in these days of exposure to the audio-visual media. Accustomed to television, they have a shorter attention-span; they will no longer accept two-page descriptions of a knight's armour, as in Walter Scott. And there are gaps in their knowledge—as there are, too, in the author's picture of the past.

Recently, writing a series of playlets for the BBC about emigrants to Virginia in the 17th century, I planned to make my colonists Cavaliers escaping from Roundheads in the Civil War. The producer told me that this wouldn't do: the nine-year-old audience would never have heard of Cromwell. Could some of the characters be Quakers? No again, because the nine-year-olds didn't know about Quakers, and only a limited amount of explanation could be crammed into a twenty-minute script.

Still more fundamental are the gaps in the author's knowledge. Everyone has his strategy for dealing with them. He can leap nervously across from one solid fact to another, using only those of which he is certain. That method is ethical: but it leads to rather bloodless writing. Flaubert lamented, when he was working on *Salammbô*, that his material knowlege about the lives of the Carthaginians was so scanty that he had to spread it thin to make it last. Yet when Tolstoy tells us, in *War and Peace*, that Napoleon had a bad cold before the battle of Borodino, and that he grumbled because the lozenges his doctor prescribed made him unable to enjoy his glass of punch, we believe the story implicitly. Was it guesswork? Perhaps: but Tolstoy had taken pains to study the battle, which had occurred sixteen years before he was born. He had looked at maps, read all the available accounts, and explored the site for several days.

Clearly, the writer of historical fiction has the duty to take such pains as he can. But what next?

Having acquired the information, he should try to forget that he ever had to seek it. Nothing is so tedious as Scott's two pages about the knight and his armour—as if he were boasting about how much he knew. Another strategy is to offer links or comparisons with one's own time. Sometimes, a writer will do this unconsciously, anachronistically; and the canny reader may detect, say, the Romantic Movement stirring in Scott's Middle Ages, the English Labour Party of the 1920s in Naomi Mitchison's Sparta, or Keble and the

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Oxford Movement in Charlotte M. Yonge's Huguenots. Writers today no doubt do the same and are unaware of it, as one tends to be unaware of the contemporary slang that infiltrates one's prose. In one sense, we can interpret the past only from our own viewpoint: but perhaps we should try to take as many bearings as possible from different points of view. What did Queen Elizabeth think of Caligula? What did Alexander Borgia think of St Paul? History, said Gibbon, is "little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind." And Mrs Markham, whose best-selling *History of England* was published in 1823, declared that "It is one of the great drawbacks to the pleasure of reading history, that it is such a painful record of human crimes." Nowadays we take the opposite view. Crime is an economic asset on any publisher's list.

Questions of accuracy and viewpoint apart, the writer of historical fiction faces three broad choices. The first is Shakespeare's option: to adopt as one's protagonist an historical character, and shape the story to follow historical events. The second, used by Rosemary Sutcliff, Leon Garfield, Alan Garner, Jill Paton Walsh, Barbara Willard and many more, is to tell a story of fictional characters against a background of fact. The third, adopted by Saki in *When William Came*, E. L. Doctorow in *Ragtime*, T. H. White in his Arthurian trilogy, and Kingsley Amis in *The Alteration*, allows scope for even more variation. The writer reshapes the course of history, using the past as a springboard for invention, faithful to the spirit of the age in question, but departing where need be from the letter. So doing, he can tease a young reader's interest into wakeful attention.

For example, the combat between Sir Grummore and King Pellinore in *The Sword in the Stone* is a memorably funny scene. T. H. White vividly conveys the weight and awkwardness of knights in full armour, the clumsiness of caparisoned horses, the narrowness of visored vision; and he strengthens the point by turning his combatants into 19th-century huntin' and shootin' county gentry. The device is legitimate, since that is what local lords would probably have been in the Arthurian period—supposing there to have been an Arthurian period. The author's extensive knowledge of chivalry, falconry, and castle life entitled him to such flights of fancy. They certainly recruited more readers than many a serious historian's conscientious sobriety.

I too, in some of my books, make use of this fanciful, looking-glass approach. Suppose, as James Thurber said, that Grant had been drunk at Appomattox; that Bonnie Prince Charlie had not turned his army back halfway down England; that the marital problems of Henry VIII had not brought about the Reformation—as, in *The Alteration*, Kingsley Amis suggests. Or suppose, as I have, that all Queen Anne's children had not died, that the Stuarts had remained on the throne of England.

TO TRY OUT THESE HYPOTHESES is fun: it can also be a useful exercise, making one think about the strands of causation and the formative elements in real events. In my own books, I encourage readers to understand that this is fantasy—not serious history—by exaggeration and nonsense, such as making rich girls wear seventeen silk petticoats, dukes have billiards cars on their private trains, conspirators plan to put St Paul's Cathedral on rollers and run it into the Thames, Phoenicians (employed by the Romans in Welsh gold-mines) go underground and remain there for 2,000 years, or Roman Britons emigrate to South America, where they establish an Arthurian society.

Not all my books take such liberties with history. The two Spanish stories, *Saddle the Sea* and *Bridle the Wind*, were based simply on things I had seen for myself or learned from factual accounts of Spain, with an external story added. A reader wrote to me about *Saddle the Sea*, taking exception to my description of the rigging of a Basque felucca—an arrangement which had seemed so strange that I had taken pains to check it, twice. That confirmed my feeling that the outline of the story is more important than recondite details, on which some expert can always cast doubt. Of *Midnight is a Place*—another seriously researched story—reviewers said that the factory scenes were convincing, but not the goings-on in the sewers. I had taken the sewer details from Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor*—whereas the carpet press in my factory was the product of a nightmare I had had before writing the book. Later, when facts were being checked for the television adaptation of the story, I discovered that carpets had, in fact, been made in the way my dream suggested.

Writers of fiction make a profession of projecting themselves into other people's minds and positions. Their

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imaginative grasp can help make a reality of the past—when hell-fire religion was part of daily life, when most communications were by word of mouth, when so much hair must have lain about on the floor because women wore it to their waists and there were no vacuum cleaners. This is what I really enjoy learning about the past: what it felt like to sit down in a crinoline, or wear armour, or share a bed-place with three other passengers in a transatlantic ship in the 18th century.

As historical writers, we have a twofold task. First, to bring an awareness of the past to children who are often reluctant readers, their ability to concentrate on the printed word impaired by too much screen-watching. Secondly, to make them aware how much we owe to the past.

When I was at school we used to sing, at the beginning and end of every term, G. W. Briggs's hymn "Our Father by whose servants our house was built of old." It was a reminder of previous school generations. As twelve-year-olds, we used to feel cynical: we knew that these North Oxford buildings had not actually been constructed by the alumni listed on the boards which flanked the stairs. Only later did we come dimly to understand that what they had contributed was the essential character of the school itself. Likewise, we intermittently remember our debt to former generations who passed factory acts, dug sewers, established public transport, and all the other benefits we now unthinkingly enjoy. Briggs's hymn continues:

> *They reap not where they laboured;*
> *We reap what they have sown.*
> *Our harvest may be garnered*
> *By ages yet unknown. . . .*

We too can contribute to the storehouse. The first and simplest way is to make for the nearest ninety-year-old, put questions, take notes, use a tape-recorder. But our fundamental duty is to match, to build upon, to develop, and to preserve the riches that our ancestors have left us. To do that, we have to respect and understand them; and the way to understanding is through the creative imagination. Historical fiction for children is one lifeline to a world they are in danger of losing.

Whig Blank Verse & Tory Couplets

The New Oxford Book of 18th-Century Verse—By W. W. Robson

The *Oxford Book* series of anthologies has been discredited lately because some of the selections have been poor and the University Press has accepted unsuitable subjects to make *Oxford Books* of. But it was a good idea to look for a replacement for David Nichol Smith's *Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse* (1926), and Roger Lonsdale, a distinguished Oxford scholar, has done it admirably.[1]

There were various ways in which he could have set about his task. He could merely have updated Nichol Smith, e.g. by including something from the one great discovery made in 18th-century poetry since 1926, Christopher Smart's *Jubilate Agno*. He would have been able to ignore the restraints of "good taste" which were part of the conventions of Nichol Smith's time but do not operate now. Otherwise the anthology could have retained the familiar pattern. But Lonsdale was permitted to take an entirely fresh look at the period. This involved the risk that he might leave out poems which many readers interested in English poetry would agree should be there. Suppose he had found Pope boring, or thought him not a poet at all, as for over two centuries some eminent poets and critics *have* thought, and had left him out. Equally strange things have happened: H. W. Garrod left Juvenal out of *The Oxford Book of Latin Verse*. Happily Lonsdale is much too sensible to do anything like that. Pope, as it happens, is amply represented—indeed in two instalments—and there are other excellent selections from all the leading names: Swift, Thomson, Johnson, Charles Wesley, Gray, Collins, Smart, Goldsmith, Cowper, Burns, and Blake ("the most poetical of all poets", as Housman called him).

In his Introduction Lonsdale cautiously turns away from Housman's view of 18th-century poetry—i.e. the poetry written between *Samson Agonistes* (1671) and *Lyrical Ballads* (1798)—as all of a piece, apart from a few bizarre interruptions, the Four Madmen: Smart, Collins, Cowper, and Blake. Nichol Smith had stressed pre-romanticism, shrewdly, because student readers usually have romantic tastes. Lonsdale hints at support for Northrop Frye's view that there was an "Age of Sensibility" from the 1740s to the 1790s. But he begins his selection at 1700 and takes the label "eighteenth century" literally: thus Crabbe is there, but nothing from his 19th-century work. Otherwise this collection is such a miscellany that it is difficult to discern a clear pattern

[1] *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse*. Chosen and edited by Roger Lonsdale. Oxford University Press, £15.00.

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in it. At any rate it does suggest various phases of the attempt to write differently from Pope: the Graveyard school of Blair, Miltonising blank verse, the craze for Ossian, the Picturesque (rather skimpily represented, but John Aikin does get in at No. 514). But the main purpose of the new *Oxford Book* seems not to be to enforce a particular view of the period but to convey its variety. Its scope and scale are larger than those of its predecessor.

Detailed comparison with Nichol Smith confirms this. He has 450 items, Lonsdale has 552. The impression that there is more "Anon" in Lonsdale may be incorrect as there seem to be about the same number of anonymous items in both, but "Anon" bulks larger in the new anthology. The spectacular difference from Nichol Smith is the number of new names. I have read quite widely in the period, but 129 of the names of poets were new to me (and there were other names I did know, but not as poets). A review of Lonsdale's book, the product of years of devoted labour, can then only be a provisional assessment. Time is needed for this new work to sink in, for us to find our bearings with regard to it and to the poetry of the period we already know, and to poetry in general.

My first impression is that the book is very like Philip Larkin's *Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse*. Indeed, apart from a few dated touches, much of it could have appeared in Larkin. Larkin was criticised for including so much minor "applied" verse, but he did give a useful cross-section of the familiar writing of the period. It seems to me that there is a similar feeling as the reader moves through any anthology covering a century or so of English verse—whether it is the 18th, or the 16th, 17th, or 20th (though not the 19th). From the '40s to the '80s of the given century there is a dull stretch. A few good pieces stand out, but mostly it is shades of grey. Anyway, whatever we think of the new material in this anthology as poetry, it adds to our knowledge of the history of taste and fashion, and it can be used for various kinds of study and teaching. For instance, we can test our recollections of major 18th-century verse by looking at Christopher Pitt's use of Dryden in No. 139, or James Cawthorn's of Pope in No. 324.

AS SOON AS WE MOVE OUT OF the accepted names the question of the anthologist's principles of judgment becomes real. Traditionally there have been four ways of judging poetry:

(*1*) Such things as rhyme, metre, correct grammar, "purity of diction", skill in metaphor, etc.

(*2*) Formal excellences, such as power of large-scale construction.

(*3*) Judgments of scale: grandeur, sublimity, profundity, etc., or imaginative power, or breadth of emotional appeal.

(*4*) Decency, "good taste", "good sense", i.e. political or moral soundness.

In modern times these standards have broken down, leaving only conventional acceptance of particular works as "historically important", or alleged technical originality (the sort of thing Ezra Pound was always looking for), or unexplained personal preference. Since the first of these is inert and the other two much too subjective, the problem of criticism becomes acute. When the demotic succeeds to the élitist, what is to be the standard? Lonsdale's book is an anthology for our times, as Nichol Smith's was an anthology for his times; and in a democratic age the criterion for liveliness in poetry can only be *subject-matter*. Thus the new *Oxford Book* includes two poems on laudanum, and a sonnet to opium; a poem on abortion; a poem against homosexuality; poems on golf; on a boxing-match; on cricket. . . . While Wordsworth is (rightly) not represented, there is a "Voyage to Tintern Abbey", and a sonnet written there, and a "Rhapsody Written on the Lakes of Westmorland." There is an extract from "The Methodist"; a poem on "The Great Fog in London, December 1762"; lines by a black slave poetess on being brought from Africa to America. And the book ends with a "Ramble of the Gods through Birmingham."

THERE IS A GOOD REASON for this way of choosing. In an interesting discussion in his Introduction Lonsdale shows how the 18th century censored itself—under the impact of the French Revolution and the fears it provoked, and the increasing influence of an already powerful "Victorianism." The anthological tradition of Dodsley, Robert Anderson, Alexander Chalmers, etc., favoured propriety and genteel sentimentalism and played down realism and frank speaking. Some of the good poets of the time were implicated in this genteelism, including Pope and, incongruously, Johnson and even Swift. It has undoubtedly put many later readers off, and encouraged mistaken views such as Robert Graves's, that the 18th century was "the age of obsequiousness." Lonsdale will appeal to most 20th-century tastes when he cuts down on the Pathetic and mock gallantry and other forms of false romanticism. He reacts towards social realism, "actuality": as he puts it, the poets who were capable of "noticing what was going on around them" (Introduction p.xxxix). He favours the "mean", in Johnson's sense: "The meanest passage is the satire upon Sporus" (Johnson on Pope's "Epistle to Arbuthnot"). Johnson thought Thomas Parnell's "An Elegy, to an Old Beauty" (Lonsdale's No. 80) "mean." Something like Northrop Frye's "low mimetic" would give the required sense.

This reaction is understandable. But social realism has played little part in poetry usually considered great, either in English or other European languages. Lonsdale perhaps implies that 18th-century poetry has been brushed aside because it was thought to be escapist, did not deal with factories and disease and drunkenness and imperialism, etc. But is it not more likely that 18th-century poetry was brushed aside because it was thought to be *uninspired*, because however hard it tried—perhaps especially when it tried—it did not sound like the poetry that had always been ranked highest in the Mediterranean culture from which it sprang?

However that may be, we should be grateful for the pleasant literary tolerance which has given us, for example, Lawrence Spooner's "On Giving Up Smoking" (No. 16),

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Robert Tatersal's "The Bricklayer's Labours" (No. 189), and Richard Jago's blank verse on the iron industry in Birmingham (No. 352). Such things are not great poetry, but they are enjoyable miscellaneous verse, to find which the editor has ransacked magazines and obscure collections, in Scotland and Ireland as well as England. There is a lot of bawdy, reminding us of Sir Robert Walpole's reason for talking it at his dinner-table (so that everyone could join in). There is some scatology, too, as in No. 315, an anonymous "Sea-Chaplain's Petition to the Lieutenants in the Ward-room, for the Use of the Quarter-Gallery." It is too Rabelaisian for my taste, but this sort of thing is very much part of 18th-century writing; much of it is found in Swift, Smollett, Fielding, and other writers of repute. The nemesis of anthologists is suggested by Pope's ironic prayer in *The Dunciad*:

> *To future ages may thy dullness last,*
> *As thou preserv'st the dullness of the past!*

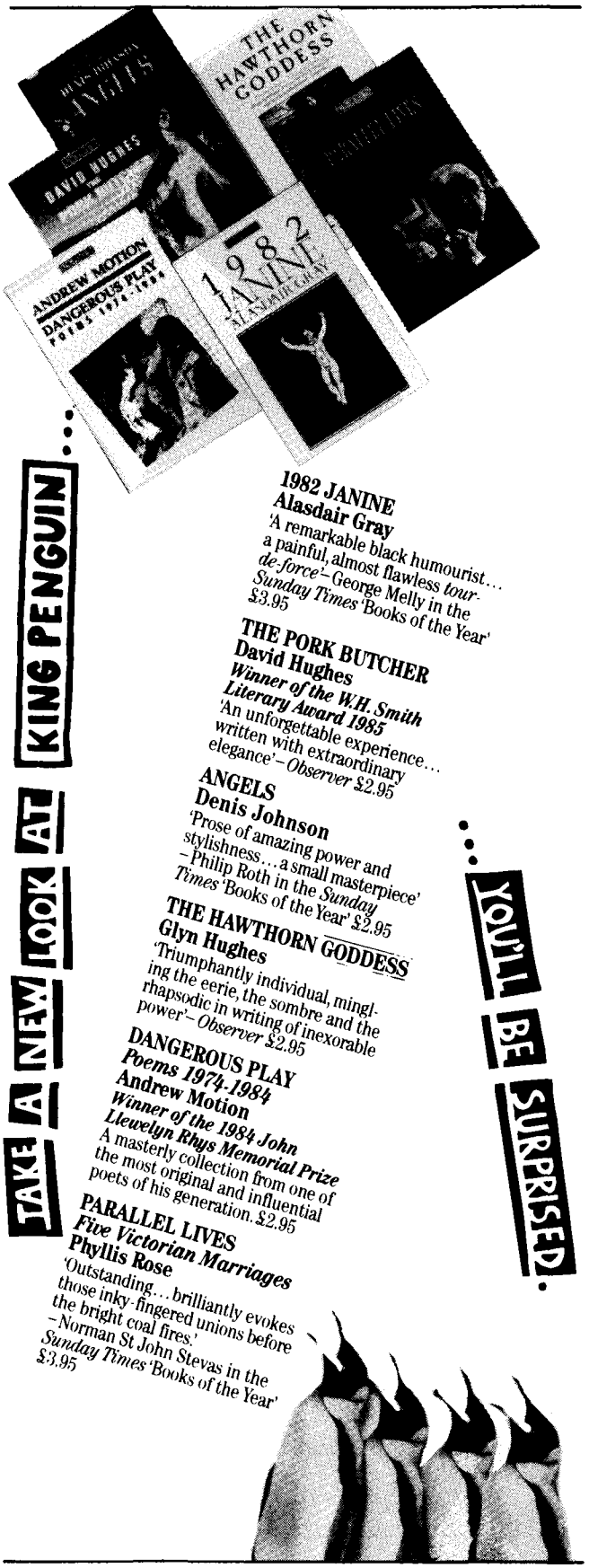
By including so much strong meat the editor has ensured that few readers are likely to find this collection dull.

But how far does it radically change our view of the period? This is something that abides our question. At the moment I have not found that it makes the period look all that different, even with all those new poets. Lonsdale does not claim that any of them are great, or of lasting historical significance. By including them alongside *The Deserted Village* etc., the accepted classics of the time, he gives a good panoramic view of the poetry which sometimes overlaps with the major work and sometimes does not. We can still recognise Edward Arber's division of the period into "Pope Anthology", "Goldsmith Anthology", and "Cowper Anthology." But until Blake the new *Oxford Book* seems to be mainly "Pope period"—and, even more, "Swift period"; much light verse is included, and here the influence of Swift was very great.

The editor has discharged his multiple function—of representing the taste of the age itself, as well as the poems that now appeal to us—with extraordinary skill. As far as the intrinsically good poems are concerned I have found only one regrettable omission, a short piece, which Nichol Smith included, by George Bubb Dodington (Lord Melcombe). It begins with this striking sentiment:

> *Love thy country, wish it well,*
> *Not with too intense a care;*
> *'Tis enough that when it fell*
> *Thou its ruin did not share.*

Because of its author's reputation as a corrupt politician, this has been quoted as a counsel of cowardly cynicism; but when the poem is read as a whole it is seen to be Rational Piety. Otherwise I have only slight doubts about the choice of poetry of period interest. Garth's *Dispensary* caused a stir in its time but there is nothing from it here (or in Nichol Smith). The old *Oxford Book* did give a short extract from William Falconer's *The Shipwreck* (1762), which once ranked with "the Bible and Shakespeare" for universal reading. There is nothing from it here; perhaps the editor did not think it good enough. There is nothing from two cross-century poets, once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very popular: Nichol Smith did include something from Samuel Rogers's *The Pleasures of Memory* (1792), but Lonsdale does not, and he gives nothing from Thomas Campbell's *The Pleasures of Hope* (1799)—Nichol Smith also left it out, and Campbell generally. I hope Campbell does not get lost altogether, as he was a poet by no means negligible, but his best work perhaps belongs to the 19th century. Another piece with period interest which Lonsdale leaves out is William Gifford's attack on the Della Cruscans (Nichol Smith's No. 439). Except for the Bubb Dodington poem I would not venture to question the editor's judgment about any of these; I merely note them as decisions that people interested in the period might want to think about.

A FEW OTHER OBSERVATIONS. The decision to modernise accidentals (spelling, punctuation, etc.), except in the special case of Smart, seems to me right, and it is done discreetly. The notes possibly err on the side of sparseness, but this is better than the other extreme, and more pages would have made the volume more expensive; as things stand, it is extraordinarily good value for its modest price, beautifully produced and printed, and the work of a scholar who has *lived* in the period as few people today can have done.

I would have liked a citation of Psalm 19 in the note on Addison's "The spacious firmament on high" (No. 24). People do not read the Bible much now, and I have just come from a discussion of 18th-century thought in which it was implied that Addison in his hymn had been the first poet to proclaim that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." The notes on *The Deserted Village* (No. 344) and *The Village* (No. 432) might have drawn attention to the lines which Johnson contributed to these poems. But Nichol Smith gave us no notes at all. Another superiority of Lonsdale is that, where Nichol Smith gave dates of publication, Lonsdale gives dates of composition (when known).

And I applaud his liking for complete poems. He gives two whole cantos of *The Rape of the Lock*. He gives the whole of *The Vanity of Human Wishes*; Nichol Smith, though a noted Johnsonian, gave only extracts. He gives the whole of Thomson's *Winter* in its earlier version, the whole of *The Deserted Village*, and the whole of Book I of Crabbe's *The Village*. These are emphatic pluses. One small minus: the index of first lines refers to the numbers of the poems, not of the pages; this is convenient for printers, but not for readers.

One difficulty for anthologists is generic: the 18th century was mostly a time of long or middle-length poems, not of lyrics. Obviously a book of this size cannot cope adequately with dramatic verse. Narrative verse gets a better showing. True, Lonsdale leaves out "John Gilpin", which Nichol Smith had included, but I think rightly; it takes up nine pages of the old *Oxford Book*, and it just isn't well written enough. I think it more of a pity that he left out Sir John Henry Moore's "The Duke of Benevento", which Nichol Smith had included: a rapid little novel in verse, Byronic before Byron. For translations, of which there are so many in this period, Lonsdale refers us to Charles Tomlinson's *Oxford Book of Verse in English Translation* (1980). He himself has dealt well with the problem presented by the "treatise-poem", such as Cowper's *The Task*: we do get the sense of their prominence at this time. Finally, there are plenty of songs—not only "Heart of Oak" and "Tom Bowling."

SO MUCH FOR the general character of the anthology. I should now like to report on the results of a single continuous read-through. The selection begins, as Nichol Smith's did, with John Pomfret's "The Choice." This was inevitable. The poem belongs to 1700, and Johnson said that "perhaps no composition in our language has been more often perused." I doubt whether that is true now, but this poem does give us the epitome of the "Sabine farm" ethos which attracted the bachelor poets of the 18th century (few of the well-known ones married). Reading the (very good) selection from Swift, I lingered over No. 14, "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift." This is Swift's best known and probably his best poem. Puzzles about its structure and meaning remained after I had read it, for all its straightforward appearance, though I had had the benefit of reading David M. Vieth's discussion of it in 1978. It has the curious effect of seeming to be a poem that comes straight out of life, though in fact it is, as Vieth showed, the clever presentation of only one of the masks which Swift wished to persuade the world to take as truth.

The selection from Defoe which follows is less happy.

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Defoe was very uneven as a poet and his best lines have to be picked out from a mass of very inferior stuff, but I should have liked to have at least these from "The True-born Englishman", on Charles II:

> *The royal refugee our breed restores*
> *With foreign courtiers and with foreign whores,*
> *And carefully repeoples us again*
> *Throughout the lazy, long, lascivious reign.*

Not in Lonsdale or Nichol Smith: I quote from the extracts given in Aldous Huxley's *Texts and Pretexts*.

In the early part of the book no piece seemed to me better than Matthew Prior's "Jinny the Just" (No. 31). This is a very attractive poem, surely Prior's best. The slight and pleasing element of uncertainty (the reader is made to wonder whether the poet is to be found completely endorsing Jinny) is part of the positive effect of the poem.

Lastly, among those earlier poems I took particular pleasure in No. 59, "A Winter-Piece", by Pope's butt, Ambrose Philips. Here is a little of it:

> *In pearls and rubies rich the hawthorns show,*
> *While through the ice the crimson berries glow.*
> *The thick-sprung reeds the wat'ry marshes yield*
> *Seem polished lances in a hostile field.*
> *The stag in limpid currents, with surprise,*
> *Sees crystal branches on his forehead rise.*

It is in Nichol Smith, but few readers seem to have noticed it there.

THE DECISION to give Pope in two instalments—"early" and "late" Pope—might be questioned, but it does keep us in mind of the age that was changing round him. Pope's personal character and poetic achievement remain matters for controversy, as they always have and always will, so long as people care about such things. But he has always been allowed to be top of the second division, and my own feeling is that he was more than that: a mighty poet, and despite everything still glowing with the radiance that Wilson Knight sees in him. I was particularly interested by "The Alley: An Imitation of Spenser", which had not come to my attention before. It has the element of realism liked by Lonsdale. It also shows, as other of his inclusions do (Thomson, or Shenstone), how extensive was the 18th century's use of Spenser; not only direct imitation of his fairy world, but, as in this Pope piece, adaptation of his direct manner and a versification at the same time woven and flowing.

Among other poems by Pope here I was especially glad to see the "Epistle to Miss Blount" (No. 65), the poem which to my mind does more than any other to refute Arnold's description of Pope as "a classic of our prose." The idea that this poem would somehow have been better if it had been written in prose at once suggests the sheer impossibility of imagining a prose equivalent for it. As for the later Pope (see, for example, No. 169, "Yes, I am proud" . . .), I was impressed as always, but could not forget Crabbe's comment:

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Our Pope, they say, once entertained the whim,
Who feared not God should be afraid of him;
But say they fear'd him, was it further said
That he reform'd the hearts he made afraid?

Readers unsure about the validity, and effectiveness, of moral invective may prefer the lighter note of Gay, whose "Birth of the Squire" is given. It is an attractive light poem, recommended by the literary critic Yvor Winters, a humorous tribute to "the *Pollio* of Virgil." It is a reminder that the Anglicisation and creative imitation of classical models was very well done in the 18th century. Lonsdale gives us many suggestions of this, coping skilfully with the problem of presenting the products of a Mediterranean culture to an increasingly Atlantic one. An amusing piece new to me is No. 102, by one "Captain H—", *floruit* 1716: it is "An Imitation of Martial, Book II Ep. 105." (This should be "Book XI, Ep. 104"; perhaps Captain H— got it wrong.) Too racy for polite anthologies, it in fact tones down the ancient indecency in a very agreeable way. In this vein it is also pleasant to read No. 105, by Leonard Welsted, mocked by Pope:

Flow, Welsted, flow, like thine inspirer beer. . . .

But from this poem it would appear that Welsted's inspirer was wine. "The Invitation" is in the Ben Jonson tradition (the poem inviting a friend to supper), going back, as Lonsdale's note points out, to Horace, *Epistles,* I.v (cf. also Martial again, V. 78).

Before coming to the graver and more introspective poets who followed Pope it seems fitting to take leave of the earlier poets by referring to George Farewell (*fl.* 1733). This hitherto unknown poet seems to be favoured by the new *Oxford Book*: he is given seven entries. They are quite powerful in their own way. Here is a passage from "An Adieu to a Landlady" which suggests the flavour:

But since her buttock-bubbies thus she dares
Just at mine elbow boldly to reverse
Pat for the purpose, with sarcastic switch
I can't forbear to flog the wicked witch.

BUT SOON AFTER WE ARE in the more serious, pathetic, morally concerned atmosphere of the 1740s and onwards. *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (No. 215) could be taken as representative of this new solidity. Though no one admires Samuel Johnson more than I do, I do not find this poem greatly appealing, apart from the moving lines on the "young Enthusiast." If there is to be a single representative poem of the 18th century I would prefer it to be the usual choice, Gray's *Elegy* (Lonsdale's No. 237), and in the form which is given here, the final form he gave it, in which the first half is "Augustan" and the second half "Romantic." But hereabouts there is a poem which has a note both Johnson and Gray lack, something that goes beyond Rational Piety. This is No. 226, Charles Wesley's "Wrestling Jacob." Here are two stanzas:

Wilt thou not yet to me reveal
Thy new, unutterable name?

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Tell me, I still beseech thee, tell;
To know it now resolved I am.
Wrestling I will not let thee go,
Till I thy name, thy nature know.

'Tis all in vain to hold thy tongue,
Or touch the hollow of my thigh;
Though every sinew be unstrung,
Out of my arms thou shalt not fly.
Wrestling I will not let thee go,
Till I thy name, thy nature know.

Out of the mysterious incident in *Genesis* the poet evolves an intense introspective poem to set beside the finest things in the century, Gray in the cancelled stanzas of the *Elegy*, some of Cowper, Frances Greville's *Prayer for Indifference* (No. 317). Charles Williams once suggested that every age of poetry carries its own corrective, like Hopkins for the Victorians, or Byron for the Romantics. Charles Wesley was the corrective for the Augustans.

In comparison Edward Young of the *Night Thoughts* (No. 231) seems in this selection overdone and gassy in his blank verse, thoroughly deserving the severe strictures George Eliot was to pass on him in one of her best critiques. Perhaps we might have been given something from his satires in couplets. Young seems livelier in couplets, the metre of Tory poets, than in blank verse, the metre of Whigs. We are now at the threshold of a poetic change, of which Smart was the unwitting forerunner. Here for once Nichol Smith is fuller than Lonsdale, giving the whole of the *Song to David*, while Lonsdale gives only 38 stanzas. But we do get enough to appreciate the aptness of Frye's description of its "pounding thematic words and the fortissimo explosion of its coda . . . a musical *tour de force*." The reason for not giving all this poem is to make room for other poems, and for seven pages of *Jubilate Agno*. I am not sure whether it would not have been better to give it all, and drop the minor poems. As Housman said of Smart:

> "Neither the prize founded in Cambridge University by the Rev. Thomas Seaton nor the successive contemplation of five several attributes of the Supreme Being could incite him to good poetry while he was sane."

When I read his two great poems I am visited first by the thought that the poet *was* out of his mind, and then by the reflection that it would be almost worth being out of one's mind to be able to write like that. Yet it is interesting to note that despite his eccentricity and "enthusiasm" Smart did not quarrel with the poetry of his age, as Blake did. "For I bless the Lord Jesus for the memory of Pope, Gay and Swift." Blake, on the other hand, laughed at Pope's politeness in his "Imitation of Pope: A Compliment to the Ladies."

Wondrous the Gods, more wondrous are the Men,
More Wondrous Wondrous still the Cock & Hen,
More Wondrous still the Table, Stool & Chair;
But Ah! More wondrous still the Charming Fair.

With James Macpherson (No. 319) and his "Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland", we are back with a craze ("Ossian") that has not survived.

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The resemblance to Tolkien is striking, and the more of posthumous Tolkien comes out the more it looks like Ossian. Charles Churchill (Nos. 337-9) is a problem for anthologists. If Lonsdale has not solved it, who can? I agree with Yvor Winters that the *Dedication to Warburton* (not given here) is Churchill's best poem, but it is quite long, and it needs notes; it has not outgrown its occasion. The reader needs to have made the disagreeable acquaintance of Bishop Warburton before he can appreciate the stinging irony of this poem.

A still more powerful poem, which can stand by itself, is Cowper's "Hatred and Vengeance" (No. 380). The Sapphic metre contributes an unique and unforgettable effect to this poem. It is interesting to see how different that exotic metre seems in other pieces in this *Oxford Book*: in Watts's poem on the Day of Judgment (No. 44), probably the prototype of Cowper's far more terrifying poem; in Thomas Morris's military poem from Canada (No. 327); a discovery of Lonsdale's and excellent; Southey's lachrymose "The Window" (No. 543), written during his radical phase; and Canning's "The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder" (No. 544), which mocks it. It makes me wonder whether prosody can be a science, when a metre so markedly "the same" in all these poems can appear so differently, sometimes absurd, sometimes banal, sometimes setting the teeth on edge.

In the later pages of the *Oxford Book* we have much from radicals, revolutionaries, and feminists, but they rarely suggest a deep change in poetry; their novelty belongs to their subjects, to the surface. An exception is perhaps Thomas Holcroft's "To Haydn" (No. 440), another poem I know thanks to Lonsdale. Pope wrote brilliantly about Handel, but he does not convince me that he had much understanding of music, or of Handel (there is anecdotal evidence to support that view). Holcroft writes as one who is capable of recognising the advent of revolutionary genius in music.

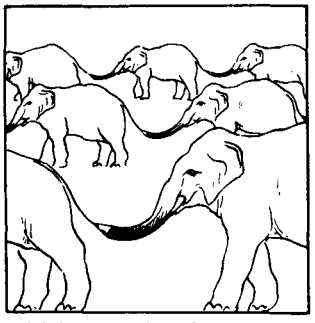
But in the end it is a poet who may have been no more than twelve years old who makes the reader feel that he is getting real poetry at last; with William Blake (beginning at No. 441) the sun has risen out of foggy mists. This is the beginning of "To Spring":

> *O thou with dewy locks, who lookest down*
> *Through the clear windows of the morning, turn*
> *Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,*
> *Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!*

Blake's poetry does not read like a culmination of any trend foreshadowed in this anthology, but comes as a surprise, as if from another world. And here we see the value of the history of poetry, as it is made concrete for us by this book; it makes us recognise the role in it of the new and unpredictable. Robert Graves and Laura Riding once wrote a spirited pamphlet called "Against Anthologies", but we need anthologies; especially when they are as good as this.

Uncommonplace Books

Wit, Wisdom & Euphemisms—By GAVIN EWART



ENRIGHT'S *Collected Poems* appeared in 1981, five years after William Walsh's *D. J. Enright, Poet of Humanism*—both landmarks in their way, the first critical study and the collected verse. Enright has also written novels and autobiography (most notably *Memoirs of a Mendicant Professor*) as well as criticism. He has done some editing of texts for students.

The most interesting thing about his poetry is its quality of unchangeableness. Good and very similar poems occur throughout the *oeuvre*. This is not a case of a Fair poet suddenly becoming Very Fair or absolutely marvellous (there are examples of this happening throughout English literature), but of a high standard consistently maintained.

The first poem in the *Collected Poems*, "Black Country Women"—with a typical slightly acid joke ("the Works of men")—is as good as any that come later. Indeed, the third poem, "First Death", is better than many that follow it; so is "On The Death Of A Child." Both have a true pathos, and could be considered untypical. Yet these are poems written in, or before, 1953. Some of the jokes are good ("The hot iron of the railroad hissed in the air"), some bad ("The Metropolitan Water Bawd"); but jokes, relying on *double entendre*, are endemic.

Later, with *The Terrible Shears*, we have a verse biography, in short pieces, a wholesome corrective to Betjeman's self-indulgent Wordsworthian meanderings—though these have their own charm. Enright is never the outspoken self-revealer in the Pubic Confessional mode. Tragedy is tragedy and comedy is comedy and, even if they sometimes get mixed up, as in "Large Mercies", we have a lot to be thankful for:

> *I remember the schoolgirl under the bus,*
> *Her bicycle lying in her blood,*
> *And the driver in tears, saying over*
> *And over, "I'll never drive again."*

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I remember too, her leg was amputated,
And when she passed her exams
The local paper announced it proudly,
And again when she married.

That means it wasn't a bad life.
No one was dragged out of bed by
Armed men. Children weren't speared
Or their brains dashed out. I don't
Remember seeing a man starve to death.

That's something we shouldn't forget—
That we don't remember things like that.

The two full-length glosses on Milton and Goethe that followed (*Paradise Illustrated* in 1978, and *A Faust Book* in 1979) have good moments but they can be a bit laboured. The rustic Germanic English invented for the peasants ("In the tavern") leaves a lot to be desired—"Beim himmel, ere comes is lordschaft isself wi that fancy furriner." The poem "I am a Bewohner of an Elfenbeinturm", one of the "New Poems" at the end of the *Collected Poems*, is similarly disadvantaged. Nice to know that *elfenbein* = ivory and *elfenbeinturm* an ivory tower, but

Perhaps I dwell in an elf's left leg.
Or Number 11 Leg Towers maybe—
It has the ring of authenticity . . .

is low whimsy. However, "Guest" and "Explanation" are first-class poems.

His new book, *Instant Chronicles*,[1] is subtitled "A Life" and has two epigraphs, one from *Publishers Weekly* ("In biography, the fiction parts should be printed in red ink, the fact parts in black ink"), the other a snippet from Bernard Malamud to the effect that all biography is fiction. Poems are interspersed with short prose pieces, but there are not many of the latter. The tone is, as always, level:

His folk were excessively averse to exaggeration
And other extremes.

But it's all straightforward and easygoing. Is "Appearances", though, a poem about an English professor under surveillance by the police in a foreign land, or is it partly about the British clearing out of the British Empire?

Then petty crime revived in the bars, disguise was discarded, unfriendly
drunks threatened to knife him.

Probably not, but you never know. As always, rhyme comes and goes. Rhyme, of a sort, is always there; but it's never very insistent. Enright's teaching career in England, Japan and Egypt provides a lot of the subject matter. The ironies come thick and fast, nowhere more so and to better effect than in "A Child's View", where a Japanese Christian child considers Hiroshima:

The amah was Mrs Okamoto, a good Christian
And her loving crony. How proud the child was

[1] *Instant Chronicles: A Life*. By D. J. ENRIGHT. Oxford University Press, £4.50.

WE BELIEVE

Rt. Rev. Mgr. A.N. Gilbey

FOREWORD BY
AUBERON WAUGH

IMPRIMATUR 1983
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When Christmas came and her dear one's praises
Were sung by all: "Okamoto ye faithful!"

They pored over pictures of Hiroshima: ashes,
Shadows of people printed on a bridge, a hole
Burnt in a youngster's pants ("It must have hurt!").
Who was it did those bad unchristian things?—
The Aremicans it was, the cruel Aremicans.

There were foreigners scattered here and there—
A few Eikokujin and the indistinguishable
Amerikajin, and the more exotic Furansujin
Like her mother, some Orandajin, an old Doitsujin
Teaching German at her father's college.

But none, not one, of those heathen Aremicans
Who burnt holes in you and turned you into shadows.
Just thinking made you shiver. But not too much.
They were far away, and you would never meet them.

This is a very typical poem (and a very good one), "political" in the broadest sense, as many of Enright's poems are (it would be hard to say for which political party he would vote in a British election). It's not the sort of poetry that Auden wrote or John Fuller writes, not technically complicated—but sufficiently under control to give the effects he wants. Liberal, humane, but never expecting too much of life or of mankind, humorous in many instances, detached in most. "From the ashes", for example, continues the thought of "Apocalypse", the poem that contains the "ten-tongued mammoth larks." This is today's Berlin:

We all adapt. Always there are bigger villains,
Other victims, somewhere. There are always
New theatres, new Rilkes, new persuasions.
Life must go on, with so much gone already.

In the poem "Sunny Siam", "even the corpses wore a tortured grin" (appropriate in a Land of Smiles).

ENRIGHT IS THE MASTER of the poem that embodies small but significant incidents, the miniature that sets a scene or mood or both ("Even so"), or describes an ethnic identity (the Chinese in Singapore for example). Are some a little too lightweight? It depends how light you like your verse. They are seldom trivial, always analytical, "intellectual", and usually contain general truths, arguing from the particular. There are reflections in prose, and a rare rhyming epigram, "The biographical mode":

Observing their subjects, biographers grow curious.
Observing biographers, their subjects grow cautious.
The bonfires of the latter make the former truly sore.
Letters can prove a lot, but burning them proves more.

The old-fashioned true/blue rhyme is very rare in Enright. "The biographical mode" is the first in a collection of "Short Thoughts", mostly not up to this standard. The prose pieces tend to be prosy and/or to have substandard jokes ("individualists" writing "me-moirs"). There is a nice cautionary tale about Poul (a Dane) who catches syphilis through shyness. There is pseudo-Eastern Wisdom: "Who are the most illustrious of the people of Ch'in? Fu Manchu and Confucius He Say." Some of the other pronouncements in the persona of the Sage are not so rewarding, nor are the prose worries about the seat of the soul or the stray bits of cracker-barrel philosophy: "That there was justice in the world he saw;/And of injustice rather more."

Memorable lines don't exist in Enright. The pleasure, which is very great, is in the ideas and the originality of the viewpoint—and the material. He's always interesting, often penetrating, sympathetic, undogmatic and entertaining. Wit and humour are never far away and these go with a strong sense of reality; hyperbole and overwriting are unknown in his work. If rhetoric is absent too, that is a good thing as well as a bad thing.

EVERYBODY KNOWS ABOUT euphemism (speaking well of things that are bad), from the clichés of popular fiction ("He was not a pretty sight") to the phrases used by Hitler and the Nazis to disguise the policy now known as Holocaust, and this includes comic variations like the Australian "technicolour yawn" for vomit. If the Greeks invented it, calling the avenging Furies the Eumenides (the Kindly Ones), this was from a superstitious fear that if you insulted such dangerous people they might take their revenge on you. In much the same way, perhaps, the Devil was called Old Nick in England—familiarity and domestication masking or lessening his power to harm, at least in the minds of the speakers.

Modern uses have more to do with political insincerity and advertising techniques, in particular with the officialese of established authorities. It is by no means harmful to call those stricken by old age Senior Citizens, or old women who have become fat the possessors of "the more mature figure." Twisting political realities is a good deal less desirable.

All these things being known, accepted and understood, do we need a book of essays about them?

Perhaps yes, perhaps no. Enright's sage professorial introduction to *Fair of Speech*[2] includes the points made above (jotted down before I began the book). On the credit side, you can have some fun with the evidence ("tubesteak" for "Frankfurter" and the sinister "Peacekeeper" for a weapon of nuclear war). Enright is right when he says that Newspeak was Orwell's most correct prophecy in *1984*—it already existed, with "liquidate" and "the Final Solution", when he wrote, and probably when he tells us that pencil, from the Latin *penicillum* (little penis) has "gone largely unnoticed" as such—although Aldous Huxley has a joke about it in one of his books.

So, it can be fun. Robert Burchfield gives historical examples in English, Anglo-Saxon, and rhyming slang (Bristols = Bristol Cities = titties, Bristol City being a football team), euphs for shithouse and prostitute tabulated by century. Example: "a marmalade madam" (17th century).

Sex, "race" (itself a euph), illness, death are fertile fields.

[2] *Fair of Speech: The Uses of Euphemism*. Edited by D. J. ENRIGHT. Oxford University Press, £9.95.

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Some of the essays (essay! O word of fear, recalling Lamb's dissertation upon roast pig!) have the mandarin flavour of the genre (a euph for showing-off). Gay Talese, the American sexologist, is described as "a blue eminence" by Joseph Epstein, who however doesn't seem to realise that servicing" is a euph derived originally from the relationships of bulls and cows, and had nothing to do with cars. And, while we are speaking of cars, he might have quoted (but he doesn't) the well-known sexually euphemistic limerick:

There was a young lady of Exeter
So pretty that men craned their necks at her—
And one went so far
As to wave (from a car)
The distinguishing mark of his sex at her!

Dysphemisms receive some attention, as do French slang and French euphs (Richard Cobb). Catherine Storr deals with children's euphemisms (sex and excretion)—an interesting piece. Latin exercises in the 17th century, it appears, contained sentences including the words "Where do dogs fart?", before the Puritans moved in. She very rightly says that it's better for a little girl, describing an experience with an exhibitionist to the police, to say "He sticked his penis out" than to be overcome by ignorance, fear and shame (this was an actual case).

Patricia Beer's essay, another good one, is as much a survey of the English novel between 1750 and 1870 (Fielding, Cleland, Richardson, Jane Austen, Dickens) as it is about euphemism, but none the worse for that. Derwent May, on the media, mentions a CIA assassination unit called the Health Alteration Committee. The Law and Medicine, where the jargons act as euphs, both feature; the political language (every State is based on war) has essays by Robert Nisbet and Richard Hoggart.

Necessarily, there is some repetition and overlapping, but all the ground seems to be covered.

Books Encountered

UNDER THIS HEADING *we propose to recommend noteworthy books, pamphlets, etc., on a variety of subjects. We begin this month with mainly literary works.*

Travelling Through the Senses: A Study of the Poetry of George MacBeth. By MARTIN BOOTH. Aquila Isle of Skye & Co Lough, £2.95.

A brief (41-page) survey of George MacBeth's life and poems, by a friend. Although therefore muted, its critical judgment is not muffled: it leaves open whether *Poems from Oby* (1982) mark a loss of power or a gain in maturity.

The English Language. By ROBERT BURCHFIELD. Oxford University Press, £9.50.

A witty, humane, and scholarly account of the evolution, use, recording, and analysis of English by a distinguished lexicographer whose most recent contribution to ENCOUNTER was "Dictionaries, New & Old: Who Plagiarises Whom, Why & When?" (September/October 1984).

Joe Orton. By MAURICE CHARNEY. Macmillan, £13.00, paper £3.95.

An admiring, slightly defensive study of the late author of *Loot*, in the publisher's "Modern Dramatists" series, by the Distinguished Professor of English at Rutgers.

Creativity and Perversion. By JANINE CHASSEGUET-SMIRGEL. Free Association Books, £11.95, paper £5.95.

The author, an eminent French psychoanalyst, based this book on lectures and seminars she gave as Freud Professor at University College, London, in 1982-83. Starting from the belief that perversion is "one of the essential ways and means [man] applies in order to push forward the frontiers of what is possible and to unsettle reality", it takes in not only clinical experience but also literature from Sade and Dostoevsky to Wilde and H. G. Wells.

Author! Author! Edited by RICHARD FINDLATER. Faber, £6.95, paper £2.95.

A rich selection from the Society of Authors journal *The Author*, compiled by its late editor, and ranging from Wilkie Collins to Angela Carter. Gems include Bernard Shaw on a then anonymous publisher ("a benevolent and high-minded shark"); V. S. Pritchett on thieves of time ("visitors are the writer's worst plague"); and Tom Stoppard on options ("The Definite Maybe").

An American Procession. By ALFRED KAZIN. Secker & Warburg, £12.50.

An American *Great Tradition*? No, but a series of thoughtful essays on a score of writers, from Emerson to Scott Fitzgerald, partly based on lectures, seminars, reviews, essays, and introductions, by a prolific and perceptive editor and critic. Henry James and T. S. Eliot march too.

Eric Linklater: A Critical Biography. By MICHAEL PARNELL. John Murray, £16.00.

A diligent and respectful "authorised study" of an assiduous novelist and man of letters, best remembered now for *Juan in America*, *Poet's Pub*, *Private Angelo*, and Cyril Connolly's lethal lampoon, "Mr. Mossbross Takes the Class."

A Vanished Present: The Memoirs of Alexander Pasternak. Edited and translated by ANN PASTERNAK SLATER. Oxford University Press, £12.95.

Vivid and revealing reminiscences by Boris Pasternak's younger brother, elegantly translated by his niece. Old Moscow, art, music; Scriabin, Mayakovsky, Isadora Duncan: a pre-War, pre-Revolutionary world emerges in the text and illustrations. Only the spine mars an enchanting book.

Ireland and the English Crisis. By TOM PAULIN. Bloodaxe Books, £12.95, paper £5.95.

A fighting collection of literary-critical essays, mainly but not exclusively concerned with the infernal triangle: England, Ireland, and Ulster. The fisticuffs include famous bouts with Conor Cruise O'Brien, Ian Paisley, and some academic English specialists; but there are Auden, Amis, and John le Carré too.

Essays from Oceania and Eurasia: George Orwell and 1984. Edited by BENOIT J. SUYKERBUYK. Universitaire Instelling Antwerpen.

In his Preface, the editor of these papers from the Antwerp Orwell Conference 1983 thanks two colleagues "for undertaking the tedious job of transcribing Mr [Anthony] Burgess's speech." It is in fact one of the best contributions. Others blend insight and unintentional humour: an equivocal feast.

R.M.

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This Spy Business

Unprofessional Reflections—By H. S. FERNS

THE BRITISH PUBLIC is being invited once again to engage in searching the collective conscience about spying on behalf of the Soviet Union. Accordingly it is perhaps worthwhile to ask ourselves what spying is, and what is achieved by clandestine intelligence-gathering. Malcolm Muggeridge, who was himself an Intelligence officer during World War II, has dismissed spying as a useless and indeed a comic activity, unworthy of the men and women whose minds should be occupied with the immortal questions. At the other extreme are those who, according to Ferdinand Mount, believe that the political destiny of nations is determined by secret and hidden forces which cannot (and perhaps should not) be exposed to public enquiry. Is it possible to come to some rational conclusion on a matter about which there is obviously a conflict of views?

Malcolm Muggeridge's conclusions are based upon a comparatively innocuous experience of secret intelligence-gathering. He was stationed in a territory in Africa which was part of the Portuguese empire, and Portugal was a neutral state during World War II. Gathering information about one of the belligerents for the benefit of their enemies in the territory of a neutral is illegal, and, to this extent, Muggeridge's activities were those of a spy. Portugal, however, really did sit on the fence, and wanted to keep all its options open, with the result that the Portuguese authorities turned a rather short-sighted eye on the Intelligence activities by belligerents in their territories. Malcolm Muggeridge did report on ship movements in the Mozambique Channel. One may presume that his activities contributed to the safety of Allied shipping in these waters and, to this modest extent, made a contribution to the victory of the Allies over the Germans and the Italians. He probably did deserve the medal which he was given for his services, the consequences of which were not decisive but none the less were a real advantage in a political struggle, the outcome of which we cannot say was evil nor to the disadvantage of the British community. In other words, it is possible to justify Malcolm Muggeridge's activities during World War II, even though he regards them as of little or no consequence, and as evidence of human folly.

Another spy, whose activities are pretty well documented, is Richard Sorge who, on behalf of his Soviet master, penetrated the German Embassy in Tokyo, the Japanese Imperial family, and the Japanese General Staff. He was caught, but not before he had informed the Soviet government that the Japanese were moving their main forces southward, to attack the British and French Empires and away from the eastern frontiers of the USSR. With full confidence in the safety of their rear in the Far East, the Soviet High Command were able to transfer forces from east to west, and then were able to repair the military disaster which had brought the Germans to the outer suburbs of Moscow in December 1941. Spying, to the Soviets, was obviously worthwhile, and Richard Sorge deserved the highest Soviet honours awarded to him posthumously; one can understand why at leat three extensive studies of the man have been published in the Soviet Union in the past decade.

Muggeridge and Sorge, as practitioners of the art of spying, were engaged in an activity which seems inevitable, given the fact that governments require information to carry on their work and, at the same time, are obliged to conceal as much as they can from other governments with whom, according to circumstances of the international political order, they may be either negotiating or fighting. Governments are much like bridge- or poker-players. They may wish there were mirrors behind the backs of their opponents, but they make as sure as they can that no reflection of their own cards is visible to the other players.

EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT there are advantages to governments in knowing what their opponents are up to: what resources they possess; how they are planning to use them; and what their intentions are. This being so, there are few governments nowadays which, in order to take themselves seriously, do not engage in clandestine intelligence-gathering while at the same time devoting much attention to keeping their own

H. S. FERNS *was from 1961-81 Professor of Political Science at the University of Birmingham; he is now Emeritus Professor. He was educated at the University of Manitoba and at Trinity College, Cambridge. His books include "Reading from Right to Left: One Man's Political History" (University of Toronto Press, 1983), "The Disease of Government" (Temple Smith, 1978), "The Argentine Republic, 1516-1971" (David & Charles, 1971)—and, as co-author, "What Politics is About" (Sherwood Press, 1985).*

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secrets. The very nature of the activity prevents the public from knowing much about what goes on, how much is spent, and with what results.

There is, however, one notable exception: the USA. The American political process, based on the US Constitution (and amplifying legislation), ensures that sooner or later the activities of the US Government are revealed in detail; and this has happened in the matter of secret intelligence work both at home and abroad. Not only do the representative organs of government in the United States—or at least a significant number of the Representatives and Senators in the two houses of the US Congress—consider it their constitutional duty to scrutinise every detail of executive action, but many servants of the executive feel themselves conscience-bound to reveal what they know about their employer's policies and activities. The result is that the world knows more about intelligence-gathering than would otherwise be the case. If the Americans managed to be as secretive about their Government's activities as the Soviets (or even the British, the French, or the Israelis) there really would be grounds for supposing that the fate of the world can be determined by secret, conspiratorial forces. As it is, and as a consequence of "open government" in the United States, we are able to form some idea of what this business of spying is, whether it can be justified, and what can be done about it.

IN THE FIRST PLACE we know that much intelligence-gathering is now based on high technology and not only upon the reading or purloining of secret documents. The kind of spying which figures so prominently in the entertainment industry absorbs, in fact, few of the resources of government. Capital-intensive activity, based upon reconnaissance by satellite photography and radar-scanning, yields vast amounts of hard intelligence-data about military installations and military activity; and this accounts for a high percentage of expenditure by governments on finding out what other governments are doing. Ten years ago the US Government was spending in excess of six thousand million dollars a year on intelligence work, and roughly 80% of this went on "intelligence hardware" and the staff required to analyse and understand what such hardware discovered. Seven times as much money (and nine times as much manpower) was being absorbed by military Intelligence agencies as went into the CIA, popularly supposed to be the main Intelligence agency and spy organisation of the US Government.

The Reagan Administration has increased expenditure on the Intelligence agencies proportionately more than it has on armaments; but it is by no means clear whether or not the emphasis is the same as it was under President Reagan's predecessors. For the time being at least, the public is not learning as much about American Intelligence work as in the 1970s, but it is still possible for Americans to debate the merits or otherwise of a contemporary CIA handbook on guerrilla warfare and the clandestine mining of the harbours of a state (Nicaragua) with which the United States is not formally at war.

High-technology intelligence apparatus yields a large volume of hard information, i.e. where military installations are located, and what is happening in and around them. It is essentially a moving picture of what is taking place in the Soviet Union, and much can be deduced from these pictures; but at best this information can do no more than confirm, amend, or contradict what is discovered by enquiry into intentions, decision-making and its outcomes.

Obtaining reliable information about intentions, decision-making etc., is part of the business of diplomats appointed by one government and accepted and given facilities by another one. Much information is acquired in this way, but if the determination is there to withhold information—or provide misleading or positively wrong information (and it would seem that this determination exists in varying degrees in the minds and practice of most governments)—then there are limits to what diplomats can do to keep their own government reliably informed about the intentions and activities of the governments to which they are accredited. Furthermore, the decisions of some governments are purely arbitrary and opportunist—not the product of reliable information or carefully considered judgments of what to do in any set of circumstances. The search for information, and a reliance upon it, cannot completely overcome the factors of caprice and chance.

Illegal or clandestine intelligence work, i.e. spying, represents an attempt to overcome the shortcomings of official diplomatic intelligence work, and the information collected by journalists and travellers. It is particularly useful when ordinary channels of information are disrupted, as they are in wars both hot and cold. Spying is, too, an endeavour to overcome the inadequacies, or to supplement the information gained by the monitoring of electronically-relayed messages of all kinds.

ONE OF THE PROBLEMS of Intelligence is not paucity of information about "the other side", but its abundance. How does one discover in the vast haystack of information garnered from the airwaves, telephone bugs, and satellite surveillance the needle of significant information about what

"Security"

London

A COMMUNIST *may become head of a Whitehall union whose members handle sensitive Government material, including coded messages at the Cheltenham GCHQ spy centre.*

Mike Perkins, a Customs and Excise worker, is being backed by the hard Left to replace Gerry Gillman as general secretary of the 90,000-strong Society of Civil and Public Servants.

The union's national executive is dominated by the Communist Party, which wants supporters to hold key posts.

Mr Perkins is currently the union's president and his backers are confident he will beat his main rival for Mr Gillman's job, Leslie Christie, in the New Year. The number two post in the union is likely to go to Scottish official Eddie Riley—known to support the Communist Party.

In 1986, the SCPS is due to merge with the larger Civil and Public Services Association, led by moderate Alistair Graham. Mr Graham and Mr Perkins will act as joint general secretaries until 1989.

Christopher Leake
in the DAILY MAIL (*London*)

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really matters to the "enemy government", and what it is doing and is going to do? Here the old-fashioned spy still has an important role because the problem of information about decision-making is still with us.

In the absence of satellite surveillance, Richard Sorge obtained by spying in Tokyo the information which the Soviet High Command required. Forty years on, satellite surveillance cannot tell whether, or when, orders will be given about the use of weapons and forces whose location and size may well be known to the eye of a satellite, but whose activation is a product of political decision, and whose engagement may be only a matter of minutes.

The confident action of the Soviet High Command in December 1941, in the face of great odds against them, was only the first of a series of similar confident actions in high political crises. In 1949-50 General Douglas MacArthur inflicted on the Communist forces serious defeats in Korea, and the final destruction of Communist power in the Korean peninsula was in sight. None the less, Chinese counter-action saved North Korea for the Communists in spite of superior American power. Why? Why did the Chinese Government have the confidence to send troops into Korea? Why risk assault by a power that had forced Japan to capitulate in a matter of days following the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

One is led to conclude that the Chinese Government made a rational decision because the outcome of their action was successful, and consistent with rational calculation, *if they had reliable information about what the Americans would and would not do.* The likelihood seems to be that they did have such information: to the effect that the US Government would not widen the war and assault China with its full force. How did they acquire such information? We do not know exactly what their information was, or how they secured it, but we do know that important information was at that time being conveyed to the authorities in Moscow by Soviet agents in the British Government, and it is not fanciful to suppose that there were Soviet agents also at work in the US Government.

A similar phenomenon of smooth, confident Soviet action can be observed in Hungary in November 1956. The reformist government of Imre Nagy withdrew Hungary from the Warsaw Pact, and appealed for support from "the West"; in fact from the USA. Public declarations and anti-Communist rhetoric in the United States and the NATO countries would suggest that an endeavour of any Eastern European satellite to liberate itself from Soviet control would be welcomed and supported. But none came. The Soviet Government launched a massive and successful intervention in Hungary in spite of the fact that the capacity of the United States to hit them hard with an atomic assault was a reality to which the Soviets, at the time, had little capacity to reply. Yet the Soviet Government confidently mounted an attack on Hungary just as the Chinese had done in Korea. This at least suggests, if it does not prove, that the Soviets had reliable information about the intentions and policies of their opponents.

Of course they did; at least to a certain extent. We know, for example, that Hugh Hambleton, a Canadian and a Soviet agent, began working at NATO's headquarters in November 1956, and was soon supplying the Soviets with a continuous flow of information. It can be assumed that this was nothhing new. Jacques Paques, for example, a Frenchman and a Soviet agent, was established in the central registry at NATO's headquarters so that the *KGB* could send for files to be photographed by Hambleton, and probably other agents, with as much knowledge and ease as a NATO staff officer. Jacques Paques was sentenced to 30 years by a French court in 1961, and it would appear that he had been active on the Soviets' behalf for some years. It seems pretty obvious that, in the Hungarian instance, Soviet decisions were based on good information about the likely response to their actions of the American Government and NATO.

MOVING FORWARD TO THE 1980s, the East-West military balance had much improved to the Soviet advantage. Why, then had the Soviet Government not behaved in Poland as it did in Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968? Does the information on which they rely suggest that American policies have changed, and that the risks of a strong response by the Americans are now greater than in the days of President Dwight Eisenhower and President Lyndon Johnson? Or has their information dried up, or become less reliable? If this last possibility is the true one, we may suppose that the Soviets, confronted with greater risks of an unknown, which it is not to their advantage to test, have decided to adopt less robust tactics and rely on Polish vested interests to preserve the Polish-Soviet connection. On the whole, however, the policies of the Soviet Government since their success at Yalta, itself based in part on good information, suggest that they have always had—and still have—sources of information about the real, as distinct from the rhetorical, policies of the US Government, and that they trust this information.

In order to understand spying as a means of obtaining information, one has to take full account of trust. Information, no matter how accurate, is of no use in decision-making if the decision-makers do not trust the sources of their information. The hard information generated by, say, satellite surveillance is considered trustworthy and true because there is a strong tendency in sophisticated societies to have confidence in technology and technologists. Technological expertise cannot, however, yield information about policy independently of human agencies, and this is where the matter of trust comes in. Obviously, a Soviet leader does not trust an American leader and vice versa, any more than one poker-player will trust an opponent if, without showing his cards, he declares he has a royal flush. Both want a look at each other's cards because they trust their own eyes, not their opponent's information conveyed in words. It is for this reason that governments rely on their own agents, and prefer these agents to provide them with textual confirmation of what they tell them.

The spy Hugh Hambleton, for example, was providing the *KGB* with detailed information about the decisions of the NATO General Staff from 1957 to 1961, confirmed with photostated documents—the normal modern activity of a spy. However, in 1960 the Soviet Government wanted information about Cuba for policy purposes. They took Hambleton off the job at NATO's headquarters during the summer of

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1960, and sent him to Cuba. Hambleton was a trained applied economist; he was fluent in Spanish; and he was not a Marxist. The Soviet Government wanted reliable information about the Cuban economy which would serve to confirm, amend, or deny the information which they already had from other sources. The information they wanted was not secret information in the possession of the Cuban Government, but the sort which scholars, academics, historians (Hugh Thomas, say, or Theodore Draper) could acquire. The important point is that the Soviet authorities wanted information they could trust, and they wanted "their boy" to acquire it. They could trust it. not because it was necessarily better information than they could gain out of standard books and reports, but because they had the loyalty of, and control over, the one providing it. This was the political ingredient which made the information operational for them. We know what followed from this.

SPYING, TRADITIONALLY AND narrowly interpreted, involves nothing more than acquiring information about one's opponents. Clandestine agents of one government in the territory of another government have long had another function: to influence, if possible, the political life of their place of operations to the advantage of their masters. It is this aspect of clandestine operations which has undergone a qualitative transformation since the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The Soviets, being pioneer innovators in this field, have developed a highly-sophisticated technique for influencing policy decisions in other states, destabilising communities on the other side of the ideological fence, and managing opposition in their satellite states.

The Americans have been the latecomers to the spy business. Until World War II they disdained the methods of the decadent old states of Europe who ran makeshift clandestine operations in foreign communities and in their own colonies. ("Gentlemen", said Henry L. Stimson, "don't read other gentlemen's mail. . . .") The FBI ran an Intelligence operation directed against "criminals and subversives" in the United States in the 1930s, and the US Army and Navy developed intelligence work for military purposes; but it was World War II and its aftermath which prompted them to establish clandestine political work. True to their national aptitudes, the Americans jumped into the business with enthusiasm and great faith in their technological capacities. They learned from the British, and they imitated the Soviets; they also spent a heap of money on personnel and gadgetry—with what success it is hard to judge.

American discussion of their Intelligence work (and of clandestine political activities directed at foreign states) tends to concentrate on the morality of the business and not on

"Sedentary Intellectuals?"

IT IS A PITY *the friends of the late Anthony Blunt, the art historian and former MI5 officer who spied for Russia, have locked away his memoirs for 30 years in the British Library. For Blunt, when publicly exposed five years ago, took great pains to explain the pre-War atmosphere which persuaded him to place "conscience", as he put it, above loyalty to Britain.*

"In the mid-1930s, it seemed to me and to many of my contemporaries that the Communist Party and Russia constituted the only firm bulwark against fascism, since the Western democracies were taking an uncertain and compromising attitude towards Germany. . . ."

Blunt's autobiography, if it is worthy of his undoubted intelligence, will surely go beyond such simplicities. The tainted generation of Blunt, Philby, Burgess and Maclean provides rich compost for students of politico-psychology.

SOME EXPLANATIONS *are as daft as they are funny. Take the Public School interpretation, for example. Life in an English prep school just after the First World War, the argument runs, was so bloody that those who experienced it could see nothing peculiar in Stalin's Russia. In both the food was poor, it was always freezing, and the system ran on a blend of hierarchy and tyranny.*

The first thing to remember is that only a tiny minority became Soviet agents. Another public-school boy of the Blunt generation, Mr Peter Wright, the MI5 molehunter who interrogated him for more than 200 hours, said that he had often wondered why he too had not gone the way of the man he investigated.

"When the slump hit I had no money. So I didn't have the opportunity to indulge in such luxuries. I couldn't afford to be a Communist. The people who generated our troubles always had the resources to continue their lives."

The MI5 men who carried out the post-War "mole" investigations had little trouble understanding why intelligent Englishmen went soft on Russia in the 1930s and even in the 1920s when the Soviet Union seemed to be the only power trying to build something better out of the wreckage of the First World War.

A CLEARER DISTINCTION **will be made between the 1920s and 1930s in "Secret Service", a new study of the British intelligence community from the Crimean to the Second World War, by Dr Christopher Andrew (senior tutor of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge).**

Dr Andrew believes the British intelligentsia in the 1920s was much more resistant to the Soviet allure than its European counterparts, although he has uncovered documentary evidence of at least one Cambridge man recruited by the Comintern in the mid-1920s.

But the position changed some two years before the rise of Hitler in Germany, the factor emphasized by Blunt.

"At the very moment when the Labour Party seemed to be falling apart, with Ramsay MacDonald's 'great betrayal', the Soviet Union's new five-year plan seemed very exciting, not just to those who were the equivalent of today's hard left but to Fabians as well [Dr Andrew said].

If you look at the moles, there is this continuous mixture of compassion and snobbery about fashionable intellectual ideas. Nor were they appalled by the violence of the Soviet régime. They were the same as those sedentary intellectuals who like watching manly deeds on a football field. . . ."

THERE WAS *one other potent factor aiding the KGB recruiters which Kim Philby acknowledged in his memoir, "My Silent War":*

"One does not look twice at an offer of enrolment in an élite force."

Peter Hennessy
in THE TIMES (*London*)

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whether it is successful or otherwise. Whether bad intelligence work and inept clandestine politics can account for the American disasters in Cuba, Viet Nam, the Middle East, and the present difficulties in Central America, are questions not easy to answer, and perhaps impossible. Obviously American misjudgment in these areas has been massive and disastrous, but it is not necessary to accept the Soviet/Marxist arguments that events in Cuba, etc., are a manifestation of the inevitability of history *à la* Marx. Rather than accept that history is not on our side, we need to ask ourselves: what are we doing wrong?

IN THE GAME OF CLANDESTINE POLITICS the advantages of the Soviets are nearly all on their side, so much so that it may have been a serious mistake on the Americans' part to imitate Soviet practice and to attempt to "fight fire with fire." Perhaps something quite new and original, or old and well-tried (like adherence to international law) should have been tried. The attempt, in the name of *détente* and expressed in the "Helsinki Agreements", to negotiate a more open society behind the Iron Curtain has not been effective. The USSR remains a strictly-closed society in which clandestine political action has little or no chance of influence, let alone success. Can one imagine clandestine agents of the US Government organising a strike lasting for months in a major Soviet industry?

The Soviets naturally interpret the Helsinki "Final Act" in terms of their own long-standing practice in relation to the open societies of the West. They assume that any relaxation of control over their own people at home and abroad will open the way for Western clandestine political activity aimed at the destabilisation of Soviet society and an increase in opportunities for gathering information secretly. The half-hearted practice of the United States around the world tends to confirm this view, and the frequent failure of the USA in destabilisation exercises is offered as evidence that the Americans are not only wicked, but incompetent and untrustworthy.

The Soviet secret agencies have shown great adaptability, particularly since they have jettisoned some of the mental inflexibility which was a feature of Stalinism. While their distance-spectacles remain Marxist in their focus, their reading-glasses have been adjusted to pick out details in Western societies and to make use of them. The spy Hugh Hambleton provides an example of the sophistication which the late Yuri Andropov brought to the work of the *KGB* in the 1960s. In the 1950s Hambleton was a reliable traditional spy, transmitting secret information from NATO Headquarters. When he wanted a change from this work the *KGB* responded to his request by helping him to undertake a Ph.D. in Applied Economics at the London School of Economics. Once he was established in Laval University in Quebec as a teacher, he was sent to Peru—not as a Soviet agent directly but as an employee of the Canadian International Development Agency. This provided him with Canadian credentials as an adviser of the "progressive" régime of General Velasco Alvarado in Lima (and the added advantage of providing him with a salary at no cost to the *KGB*). During Hambleton's six months in Peru, General Alvarado became noticeably more "progressive" as a result of the excellent non-Marxist Soviet advice presented to him in Canadian packaging.

This established a pattern. Hambleton renewed his Cuban connection, visited Haiti "to study conditions", and was simultaneously writing learned papers for the Canadian Association of Latin American Studies and providing the *KGB* with useful information, not necessarily secret, but believable in Soviet terms. All very helpful: a Caribbean and Latin American expert.

Hambleton had other uses. Preliminary to the Soviet Government's decision to permit a large emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, the *KGB* sent Hambleton, a Canadian student of economics and history, to Israel to advise them on the economic structure of Israel and to provide them with more useful details about the nooks and crannies of the Israeli economy where agents could be established. The Professor of Economics at Laval wrote to colleagues in the Hebrew University asking for hospitality for Hambleton while he was doing his research. Unfortunately for Hambleton, he asked so many questions in the Common Room of the Hebrew University that another teacher of economics (who was also an Israeli Intelligence officer) began to wonder what the Canadian's business really was. Hambleton's passport was held up for a few minutes when he was leaving Lod Airport. It was photocopied, and *Mossad* began to study the pattern of Hambleton's travels. It became quite obvious that he had a "headquarters" in Canada and another in Vienna. *Ergo*. . . .

THIS HAPPENED IN 1970. Twelve years passed before Hambleton was put into Gartree Prison. It was not until 1977 that the FBI and the CIA came upon the information that established the certainty of Hambleton's activities, and it was not until November 1979 that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police began to question Hambleton. Although the Canadian authorities found much material evidence of Hambleton's connection with the *KGB* (such as radio receivers equipped with decoding devices of Soviet manufacture), the Canadian Government decided not to prosecute. In 1980, Hambleton visited Britain to attend a conference at Exeter University.

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He was questioned by the Special Branch, but nothing happened. The Canadian police tried to encourage Hambleton to visit the United States, where they were pretty sure he would be arrested; but Hambleton did not fall for that ploy.

The main source of publicly-available information about Hambleton is Leo Heaps's book, *Hugh Hambleton, Spy: Thirty Years with the KGB,* published in Canada in 1983. Heaps went to school with Hambleton in Ottawa, and knew Hambleton's family fairly well. He kept in touch with Hambleton over the years, attended the trial in the Old Bailey, and visited him in Gartree Prison. It is Heaps's conclusion that:

> "There has been . . . much ignorance shown of the deep penetration by the Soviets into the fabric of Canadian life. Neither the Government nor the people have been aware of the depth of subversion by the *KGB* in Canada, nor have they been able to cope with it. . . ."

THIS SURELY IS THE NUB of "the spy business." The question is this: Who and where are the Soviet agents in the Western governments, and how can the government, such as the Canadian Government, be influenced to behave as it did in the matter of Hambleton and his activities? The first and most important defection of a Soviet agent took place in Canada in 1945. This agent was the cypher expert in the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, Igor Gouzenko. From the Soviet point of view, Gouzenko's defection was a disaster. It led to the conviction of the atomic scientist, Alan Nunn May; of Fred Rose, a Communist member of the Canadian Parliament; of Dr Raymond Boyer, a Canadian scientist; and eight others. This seems a pretty good bag. But it is possible to argue that for some reason the Canadian Government never made a thorough effort to uncover the full extent of the Soviet operation in Canada.

Igor Gouzenko's testimony was instrumental in uncovering one Soviet network, that controlled by the Military Attaché, Colonel Zobotin. Gouzenko was aware of another Soviet network, but about this he had no information.

> "The other networks of which Gouzenko was aware were not uncovered [according to Professors Robert Bothwell and J. L. Granatstein]. What they produced—and continue to produce—is unknown."
>
> *The Gouzenko Transcripts* (Ottawa), p.20.

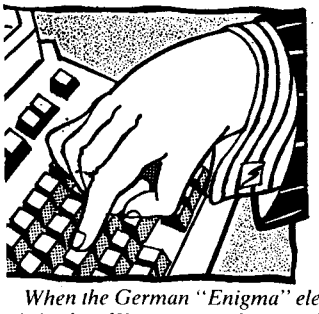
Perhaps this explains why Hambleton was not prosecuted in Canada, and why it was left to the British to do the job. As it was, the Canadian police actually warned Hambleton not to go to Britain for a second visit in 1982 and when he arrived there on 28 June 1982 a British police officer met him before he passed through immigration control at Heathrow Airport. This officer warned him of the likelihood of arrest and suggested that he return whence he came.

Isn't there something strange about the warnings of danger given to Hambleton between 1978 and 1982? The first came from his immediate superior in the *KGB*, Colonel Pavel Lukyanov, in Vienna when it was known that one of the *KGB* agents in the USA had been caught and had exchanged full information for a guarantee of immunity from prosecution. Colonel Lukyanov advised Hambleton to defect at once to the USSR, and offered him assistance to do so. Hambleton refused. The second warning was given by the Canadian police in 1982. The third by an officer of the British Special Branch, as I have described. It is a legitimate question: why were the *KGB*, the Canadian police, and the British Special Branch all so anxious that Hambleton not be prosecuted? That he was prosecuted represented some kind of integrity in the British Government, but the endeavour to steer him away from Britain points in another direction.

The late Igor Gouzenko always maintained to the few friends that he was permitted to have in Canada that there

Obscure Plaintext?

London



ALTHOUGH *mathematics and computers are vital to the penetration of any cipher system, far more messages are likely to be decrypted due to sloppy cipher and keying procedures by bored operators, defectors, or the retransmission of high-grade material in either low-grade ciphers, or even plaintext, as occurred during the "Bismarck" action in 1941.*

When the German "Enigma" electro-mechanical cipher machine of the last War was used correctly it could not be broken and, indeed, many keys (including the Gestapo's TGD, Pike, Thetis, Barracuda, Tibet, and the Special Cipher 100) all survived the War intact despite considerable daily use.

ANY CIPHER SYSTEM **handling volume traffic under difficult combat conditions must be capable of being clearly and easily understood by those involved without too much complexity. Otherwise messages reach their destination corrupt, requiring endless repetition which affords cryptanalysts additional opportunities to eavesdrop, and operators will become bored and start taking short-cuts such as using the same key twice over, or adopting identical prefixes for routine traffic.**

Moreover, if the system uses a key of any kind it is immediately vulnerable to capture or theft by a spy or defector, which raises the risk of how much past ciphertext can be retrospectively exposed as happened when Igor Gouzenko, the Russian cipher clerk, defected from the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa in 1945.

IT IS BECAUSE *of these problems that today all important military and political traffic is sent by telecipher, a combination of an electronic one-time pad with an ordinary telex, which has the advantage of being able to use normal public circuits, because its ciphertext output consists only of random letters, often padded out with bogus text to confuse traffic analysts.*

Even here there are points to watch. The random key must never be used twice, and the plaintext of the messages must not be revealed in the same format as they were transmitted.

THIS IS WHY, **for example, we cannot see the exact texts of the messages sent by the Ministry of Defence to *HMS Conqueror* during the *Belgrano* action, since the Russian equivalent of G.C.H.Q. will have intercepted and recorded these, and an insight into even part of the plaintext would give them the opportunity of reconstructing the random key tape for that period.**

James Rusbridger
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH (*London*)

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was a Soviet agent or agents high in the Canadian public service who saw to it that full use was not made of the information he possessed. The Canadian Intelligence agencies hid Gouzenko from the public and when he was presented to the public on one or two occasions he was grotesquely masked in an absurd white helmet so that he looked like an Egyptian mummy or a member of the Ku Klux Klan. All this was supposed to be necessary "to protect Gouzenko from assassination." Maybe; but maybe not. The central fact is that Gouzenko was never completely free to express his own opinions or state facts about anything, except his experience in the Soviet Union and in the military Intelligence service. Furthermore, it was alleged that he was, if not quite mad, very eccentric. It was, for example, said that he spent his time "playing with toy trains." Those who knew him personally say that this, and similar allegations, were patent nonsense. Gouzenko was an intelligent, brave, and able man; and he was not "a mere cypher clerk." This is evident enough in the books, including one substantial novel, which he subsequently wrote: not great literature certainly, but evidence of considerable powers of observation and critical analysis. *The Fall of a Titan,* his novel about Soviet life published in 1954, makes far more political sense than Alexander Zinoviev's work and anticipated by a quarter of a century studies of the Soviet *nomenklatura.* Gouzenko was, however, kept under wraps in Canada, and died in a well-preserved obscurity—maintaining to the end that not all his enemies were in the Soviet Union.

I CAN MYSELF ADD some confirmatory evidence of Igor Gouzenko's allegations that the Canadian Intelligence services were not as sharp as one might expect them to be. My name was on one of Moscow's lists of potential recruits from the University of Cambridge.[1] Colonel Zabotin, the Soviet Military Attaché in Ottawa, was instructed from Moscow to inform the atomic spy Alan Nunn May "that he could contact Henry Ferns." Under examination Gouzenko said he knew me well by name. Some of his information was wrong: *viz.* that I was "an engineer in Montreal." The truth is that I was an historian in the Canadian Department of External Affairs who resigned from the Canadian Government service ten days or so before the *KGB* man in Ottawa (Vitali Pavlov) invited me to dinner.

One would suppose that an alert Intelligence Service would have wanted to question me. This never happened. Maybe the Canadian Intelligence services were too busy; perhaps they did not have an adequate conception of the problems presented by Soviet penetration; but maybe they did not want to know too much.

THERE ARE MANY PUZZLING FEATURES about their behaviour 35 years later in dealing with Hugh Hambleton. Leo Heaps's account of their interrogation of Hambleton (and Heaps was himself interrogated at length) suggests that the officers in charge of the case were keen enough, and that they had a difficult job inasmuch as Hambleton was an able and pertinacious liar. When they had assembled their evidence, they wanted to prosecute; but their recommendation was turned down by the Canadian Solicitor-General. Questioned in the Canadian House of Commons on 23 May 1980, he stated that "there was nothing in matters uncovered by the Canadian police which would form an adequate basis for a successful prosecution under the Official Secrets Act." Strange, therefore, that it was the prospect of this evidence being presented in the Old Bailey which persuaded Hambleton to change his plea from *Not Guilty* to *Guilty.* Nor is it surprising that, in order to wrap up the case beyond any shadow of a doubt, Sir Michael Havers asked that the evidence from Canada be read into the record.

When they failed to persuade the Canadian Government to prosecute Hambleton, the Canadian police leaked some facts about the case to the Press. This produced nothing. Hambleton became the object of amused interest, and he joked with his students about being a "part-time spy." In fact the civil-liberties ploy first launched by the Labour Progressive (Communist) Party as a response to Igor Gouzenko's revelations has taken hold so well in Canada that anything of a political kind investigated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was, and still is, regarded in Canada as evidence of "McCarthyism", an American vice to which no right-minded Canadian would stoop.

In the Hambleton case the RCMP seems to have been de-

Welcome Disgrace

MR JAMES MCGIBBON, *one of those accused of having been a spy during the War when he worked for the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff in Washington, says this is "balderdash." He admits having been a member of the Communist Party, but had left by 1939. "It would have been a disgrace not to have been a member in the mid-Thirties," he says.*

If so, it was a disgrace which I bore without the slightest sense of shame. Nor do I think I was alone in that.

A DISGRACE? **The disgrace of not being a member of a Party which upheld and thereby approved the crimes of Stalin at a time when they were perfectly well known to any reasonably informed person?**

The disgrace of not approving of the deliberate killing by starvation of the kulaks of the Ukraine? The disgrace of not approving of the brutal and farcical Show Trials of Stalin's old associates (not exactly attractive people themselves) which were going on in the mid-Thirties and were daily reported in the British Press?

IF THIS WAS *a disgrace it was one I bore then with the same shameless equanimity as now. I might even go further and say I am quite proud of it.*

Peter Simple
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH (*London*)

[1] See Bothwell and Granatstein, *The Gouzenko Transcripts,* p.113. The authors add this footnote:

"There was an officer employed in the Department of External Affairs by the name of Henry Ferns, but never in the Montreal laboratory. The reference remains incomprehensible."

By no means. See H. S. Ferns, *Reading from Left to Right: One Man's Political History* (University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp.183-189.

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termined to do its job. Obstruction came from elsewhere in the Canadian Government service. Perhaps the evidence of their determination and effectiveness is an explanation of the decision of the Canadian Government to take political intelligence work out of their hands and create a new civilian Intelligence agency. Will it be a more anodyne character than the RCMP?

The fact that Hambleton was caught and prosecuted somewhere, if not in Canada where he was a citizen and a resident, is a plus; and it is evidence that, on balance. Western Intelligence agencies do actually function as they should. None the less, there are grounds for believing in the continuing reality of Soviet penetration at several levels, and that the Soviets can acquire the information they want, influence decision-making in their own favour, and launch destabilisation operations of an impressive kind.

GATHERING INFORMATION is one thing; promoting destabilisation is another. The American practice links the two together in one organisation: the CIA.[2] This is not the Soviet way. It is hard to find much evidence of destabilisation operations directed by the *KGB* either from defectors or from others. Soviet Intelligence sticks to the job of getting reliable inside information about other governments and establishing agents of influence in the political and administrative institutions of "bourgeois" states. Although they have ventured as far afield as assisting in the establishment of newspapers in "ripe" communities—for example, Greece, where the *Ethnos* newspaper case in Athens showed a careful, relatively cautious hand—the best evidence we have strongly suggests that the *KGB* is not used by the Soviet Government as the main weapon for destabilising other nations. In this matter the Soviet Government continues to rely upon its long and rich experience in revolutionary politics around the world, and the extensive networks, formal and informal, which it has developed over the years.

The ruthless methods of Stalin in the promotion of Soviet-controlled revolution beyond the borders of the USSR, so vividly recorded by George Orwell in *Homage to Catalonia,* and practised so successfully in countries occupied by the Red Army in accordance with the Yalta Agreements, have been abandoned. Even strict and detailed control of Communist Parties outside the reach of Soviet armed forces has been jettisoned, and for one very good reason. Such control does not work. China is a convincing instance, and such a disaster for the Kremlin that even the most hardened Stalinist cannot argue the utility, from the Soviet point of view, of orthodox Marxist rigidity in the promotion of revolution. Flexibility has become the key word in Soviet thinking.

The "United Front" tactics of the 1930s involved clandestine domination of the Left everywhere by Communist Parties loyal to Stalinism. Nowadays the slogan "No enemies on the Left" means an acceptance of, and collaboration with, Trotskyists, democratic socialists, revolutionary nationalists, hippy bombsters and even romantic anarchists. "Broad Left" alliances, Militant Tendencies, Euro-Communism, etc., are all acceptable vehicles on the road to destabilisation of the bourgeois-capitalist enemies. The Soviet politicians are able to adopt this "liberal" line because the Soviet state is now firmly established, its police methods are comprehensive, and its armed forces are large and technically well-equipped. They take the long view—confident that when circumstances are right they can do away with their allies as Lenin did with his in 1918-23. Keeping the pot of revolution boiling is more important than doctrinal orthodoxy.

Given this approach, it would be stupid to give the *KGB* the task of destabilising enemy régimes. If Mrs Thatcher could prove in an open Yorkshire court that Arthur Scargill and his mates have links with the *KGB,* she would be home and dry. But she cannot. What is important for the Soviet Government, however, is to establish agents of influence in "bourgeois" governments, in the media, and in educational institutions, who can by their advice and counsel keep a blind eye to what goes on, sedate and disorientate the patient, and reduce interference with the destabilisation process. If one compares the understanding of, say Ernest Bevin with, say, Barbara Castle—both Ministers in charge of labour relations—we can appreciate the point. In her *Diaries,*[3] Mrs Castle tells us quite innocently, as if it were a joke, how on her first day as Secretary of State for Employment & Productivity in Harold Wilson's Cabinet she was presented with Intelligence information about the numbers and activities of members of the Communist Party in the Amalgamated Engineering Union. Neither she nor her Permanent Under-Secretary thought this information of the least possible importance.

Good for a giggle, perhaps, and evidence of the frivolity which is not apparent in the Soviet approach to politics.

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[2] See Harry Howe Ransome, "Secret Intelligence in the United States, 1947-1982: The Search for Legitimacy" in Christopher Andrew and David Dilks (eds), *The Missing Dimension: Government and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century* (Macmillan, 1984).

[3] Barbara Castle, *The Castle Diaries, 1964-70* (1984), p.437.

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Traveller in Albania

Letter from Tirana—By PAUL LENDVAI

"I find I could get no information respecting Albania at Corfu (barely five miles distant), though the high mountains of Epirus seemed almost to overhang the island. No one knew anything about it. . . ."

ROBERT CURZON, **Journey to Albania** (*November 1834*)

AROUND NOON some four days a week the quiet airport in Tirana suddenly springs to life; in Albania, Europe's poorest and most isolated country, the arrival of an aircraft is a major event. This small nation state in a remote corner of the Balkans, roughly the size of Belgium, has no rail links with its two neighbours, Yugoslavia and Greece. No passenger-ships call at its ports on the picturesque 300-mile-long Adriatic coast. Only five foreign airlines (*Olympic* from Athens; the East German *Interflug*; Hungary's *Malev*; Romania's *Tarom*; and the Yugoslav *Jat*) maintain from Monday to Thursday a tenuous link with the outside world.

Green-clad soldiers with sub-machine-guns stand between the hive-shaped concrete pillboxes around the terminal building. On an otherwise totally empty airfield, four obsolete *MiG*-fighters and a few poorly camouflaged anti-aircraft-guns are more than conspicuous. A small group of uniformed (and plain-clothes) officers, with a woman doctor clad in a clinically white coat, approached our plane. Passports had already been collected on the aircraft before we were allowed to disembark.

On the gangway I say goodbye to my fellow-passenger, an Albanian pastry-cook from Boston who has waited three years for a return visa. (He had fled from the occupied country in 1942, leaving his entire family behind.) In front of me, Hysen Emin, an elderly pensioner, had travelled from Melbourne with his wife, his son Neki, his daughter-in-law, and a three-year-old grandson, Nevrus, for a "native's return"; it is 48 years since he last saw Albania.

Our small group of 23, scattered over a half-empty plane, was symptomatic of the prospective encounter with Albania. There were a couple of diplomats and foreign businessmen, but the passengers were mainly Albanians from abroad, most of them over 70. Travelling on foreign passports (the visas issued are usually valid for two to three weeks), they spoke among themselves only their native, first language. Obviously, love for fatherland and family was stronger than the fear and resentment of Europe's most ruthless Communist dictatorship.

Apart from such exceptional cases, Communist Albania—for four decades under the iron rule of Enver Hoxha—permits no individual tourism; only tightly-controlled groups enter the country. Albanian citizens (except a select few on official business) are not allowed to travel abroad. The 2.9 million inhabitants are practically sealed off from their blood relatives "in exile." Official statistics claim that four to five million Albanians or people of Albanian descent live outside Albania proper: in Yugoslavia (2 m.); in Turkey (1 m. to 1.5 m.); in Greece (100,000 to 300,000); in Italy (300,000 to 500,000) and in the US (100,000 to 160,000).

Enver Hoxha's régime is based on certain Balkan martial traditions. From beginning to end, the visitor is struck by visual proofs of the psychology of a besieged fortress. I must have seen thousands of pillboxes and sunken sentry-posts (many overgrown with grass and weeds) all over the country, in the coastal plain and the foothills, in village streets and maize fields. Innumerable posters warn unspecified invaders: "*Shkiperia shkemb graniti* (Albania is a granite rock)" or "*Partia mbi te gjitha* (The Party is above everything)." They call for "Vigilance, Unity and Readiness" as well as "Higher production! More exports to break through the blockade!"

A journey through Albania is a passage through the loneliest country in Europe, the only remaining outpost of "true socialism." One can't help but be puzzled by the emergence of what is undoubtedly one of the world's strangest societies.

ALBANIANS ARE CALLED "Sons of the Eagle"—from Shkiperia, Land of the Eagles, the Albanian name for their country. Descended from the ancient Illyrians, they are among the oldest inhabitants of the Balkan Penninsula. Despite endless foreign invasions and long centuries of Roman, Byzantine, and Turkish domination, they emerged from relative obscurity in the 19th century as a distinct nation, speaking a language which, though Indo-European, is quite unlike any other tongue. To grasp the violent nationalism, deep-rooted isolationism, and ruthless code of behaviour of modern Albanians, one is told to remember their long history of humiliating injustice.

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Hemmed in since time immemorial by mountains and more powerful neighbours (and so often deserted by any outside power that proffered help), the Albanians, regardless of ties of religion and politics, grew suspicious of everyone. They were always faced with the danger of foreign domination or partition, and their imagination is still fired by the brief and glorious chapter of heroic resistance organised by Skanderbeg, who repulsed the waves of the 15th-century Turkish invasion. Though raised a Muslim at the Sultan's Court, George Castrioti (1405-1468)—or Skanderbeg, as he is better known—returned to his native country at the head of an army; he liberated Kruja, his father's seat in Northern Albania, and persuaded some of the most powerful local chieftains to join him in almost 25 years of successful resistance. Although after his death some 70% of the Albanians became Muslim, and the country was still under Turkish rule at the beginning of this century, Skanderbeg's epic struggle made him a national hero, and his exploits remain a symbol, a living source of Albanian nationalism.

The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the repeated revolts of the Albanians, and the two Balkan Wars opened the way to independence. But the fledgling Albanian nation was a victim of small-power imperial ambitions. Serbia and Montenegro to the north and Greece in the south took by force well over one-third of the territory inhabited mainly by Albanians; and then, not satisfied with even these territorial gains, they aimed to dismember rump Albania. Not surprisingly, ever since then, Albanians have been obsessed by the fear that the Greeks and the Yugoslavs and the Italians covet their remaining lands.

Territorial quarrels and ethnic factors have always injected an element of almost permanent tension into Albania's relations with Yugoslavia and Greece. As a result, the 460-mile land frontiers cutting through jagged black mountains and blue lakes mark regions of legendary insecurity. Only some 50 miles away, across the Straits of Otranto, lies Italy, and shipping routes which have been important since early Greek and Roman times pass the beautiful Albanian coastline. Rapacious neighbours on land and sea have traditionally been concerned over the potential menace if Albania became the puppet of a great power.

THE BRIEF EXPERIMENT in independence ended in tragedy. During the almost 15-year rule of Ahmed Zogu, a Northern chieftain—he became King Zog I in 1928—some progress was made in breaking down the traditional systems of tribe and clan, and stamping out blood feuds (which in North Albania in the 1920s, I am told, caused about 20% of the annual male death rate). As late as 1938, though, well over four-fifths of the population were illiterate; one out of every two babies died in their first year; and the economy was totally controlled by Mussolini's Italy.

Piqued by Hitler's occupation of Prague, Mussolini wanted to show the world that he too could realise dreams of conquest, and invaded Albania on Good Friday in April 1939. King Zog fled with his young Hungarian wife, Queen Geraldine, and their two-day-old son, Leka. The Fascist invasion, the convulsions of World War II, and embittered civil war paved the way, as in neighbouring Yugoslavia, for an "unhistorical" victory of Communism.

In November 1944 Communist Partisans took Tirana and in the name of a non-existent proletariat seized power in Europe's most primitive redoubt. They were led by a handsome French-educated high-school teacher, the son of a Muslim tax-collector and land-owner from the picturesque town of Gjirokaster—Enver Hoxha.

Today "Enver", the "Beloved Great Leader" (the formal address in messages, telegrams, speeches) is the world's longest-serving national leader, for whatever that entry is worth in the book of records. He is also a man of "oriental" cunning, political shrewdness, acting talent and, last but not least, of fierce ruthlessness in dealing with external and internal foes as well as with suspected rivals and would be enemies. He has effectively combined an appeal to the deepest nationalistic instincts of the population with the ever-present threat of terror.

What kind of a society has this harshest of all Communist systems produced? According to Enver Hoxha—a utopian revolutionary if there ever was one—a near perfect social order, the only country in the world "without external or internal debts, without taxes, without inflation, without price rises and unemployment. . . ." Every day the local media contrast the crisis symptoms in the West and the East with the blissful existence of a contented and secure Albania, which

> "through the correct application of the objective laws of socialism, on the basis of complete self-reliance guarantees the progress and the full construction of the socialist society without taxes and levies. . . ."

In turn these successes have created

> "a steel unity of the Party and the people which has withstood savage enemies and defeated the intrigues and plots of the imperialists and the betrayal of the modern revisionists—Yugoslav, Soviet, and Chinese. . . ."

HOW DOES THIS SOCIETY, said (in Tirana) to be "envied by the whole world", and certainly shaped by Enver Hoxha's austere vision, look to a Western visitor?

I must first make it clear that during two recent visits—covering 2,100 miles over roads mainly built by Austrian and Italian engineers before World War II, over tarmac, and dirt tracks—I could speak only to "licenced contacts": that is to say, to officials and semi-officials. I was accompanied constantly by an escort of at least two, and sometimes by a small crowd. On the few occasions when I ventured out alone, I quickly realised that I was being followed. For the first time in 25 years of Balkan travels, I was shadowed not just on foot but by plain-clothes agents mounted on bicycles.

Albania may have the lowest per capita GNP in Europe (a mere $840), but the ratio of secret police to population probably gives it first place in the Communist league of repression. *Sigurimi*, the dreaded secret police, is said to operate (according to Amnesty International) a dozen or so concentration

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and labour camps with thousands of inmates. Only when some venturesome Albanian swims the Corfu Channel or escapes through the mountains to freedom (around 20 did so last year) does the outside world hear about the degree of tyrannical control. We, of course, were carefully sheltered from such sights and impressions, although when my escorts insisted on taking an inordinately long detour (over 60 miles) instead of the direct route from Tirana to the small town of Bureli in the Mati valley, once the stronghold of the most loyal clansmen of King Zog, I became suspicious. Later I heard that one of the worst prison camps was supposd to be on the route we had carefully avoided.

Since the Communist take-over many of the inmates of prisons and camps have been priests. In 1967, Albania "abolished God" and became "the First Atheist State in the World": 2,169 mosques, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches and places of worship were closed down. (At that time, about 70% of the Albanians were Moslems; 20% Greek Orthodox; and 10% Roman Catholic.) Since then it has been a criminal offence to practise any religion. I was told repeatedly that the Albanians have "never" been a religious people. Lord Byron's observation was often quoted: elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire a man would declare himself either a Moslem or a Christian—but the Albanian would say, "I am an Albanian."

"Yes", I tried to insist, "but what happened to the thousands of Orthodox and Catholic priests, and the Moslem dignitaries, and their families?"

"Those who were inveterate, stubborn enemies of the People's Power, clinging to the bad old habits and poisoning the minds of the people, were appropriately punished. But most of them adapted to the new situation, and found their place as technicians, shoemakers, farm or industrial workers." So replied Myslim Hotova, the 45-year-old mild-mannered Curator of Monuments at Berat. He speaks fluent French, reads English, is learning German, but has never been abroad.

In Berat the first Orthodox churches were erected in the 12th century; before religion was abolished, there were some seven mosques and five churches for the 35,000 inhabitants. With special effort Myslim Hotova managed to get permission to show us inside two mosques—16th- and 18th-century "monuments." One houses a photo exhibition, consisting of Hoxha slogans on red transparents; the other a permanent handicraft show. On my previous visit, Myslim had promised to find me at least one former churchman who had been "re-educated", and I reminded him. "What a pity!" he sighed. "My friend has just had a heart attack." And naturally time was too short to find someone else. During my whole visit it proved impossible to find a single "former priest". . . .

EVEN THE SEARCH FOR "monuments" was an exercise in futility. The main Catholic church in Tirana has been converted into a cinema, and the Orthodox cathedral into a sports hall. The great Haxi Ethem Bey mosque, the landmark of Skanderbeg Square, has been closed even to foreign visitors for well over a decade. I was repeatedly assured that the atheist State goes out of its way to spend large sums of money on restoration, yet my escorts were never able to provide a key to the door of any "restored" place of worship. Occasionally I managed to get close enough to peer into a building, and noted in the coastal town of Saranda that the local mosque was being used as a warehouse for building materials. In Vanistra, a nearby village inhabited by the Greek minority, the obviously attractive local church was now a granary. At the ancient port city of Durres (Durazzo) the local officials (including the Director of the Archaeological Museum) reacted with embarrassed silence when I asked where I could find a mosque or two. I discovered eventually that one now housed the Communist Youth Federation, while the older Fatimah mosque was in truth "being restored", but clearly was still in such desolate shape that once again no one could find a key to any door.

In many places, like the cities of Lezha and Bureli, churches and mosques had been razed to the ground during "revolutionary actions" by outraged militant youth. Shkoder, the stronghold of Roman Catholicism near the border with Yugoslavia, had the largest cathedral of the country, built in 1858; it is now a multi-purpose sports palace. Most touching of all was my sad visit to the 14th-century Byzantine Holy Mary church and monastery complex in Appollonia, the ancient 6th-century settlement. There the priceless frescoes are cracked and mouldering; the church is in a state of advanced decay. The campaign against religion has caused irreparable damage to what, elsewhere, is still deemed "the cultural heritage" of a small nation proud of its identity and traditional capacity for survival. I found it a taboo subject still; nobody was willing to concede mistakes, although I could see that most were clearly embarrassed about the entire issue.

A perhaps characteristic response came from 24-year-old Gazmend Kila, a waiter from a Moslem family, recently

"Poppycock"

ENVER HOXHA, *Albania's Communist Party Leader, has restated his country's independent Stalinist course in a message attacking both East and West. He addressed the nation's 2.75 million people in a statement marking the 40th anniversary of Albania's liberation from Nazi occupation in World War II (November 1944).*

The message was carried in the Party newspaper, "Zeri i Popullit", and made available by Albanian diplomats in Vienna.

In an appeal to his own people and those of other states to pursue a strictly orthodox revolutionary line, Mr Hoxha said:

"All the talk about taking power by means of reforms is poppycock."

Mr. Hoxha, 76, lashed out at what he described as British-American imperialists, as well as Communist states with which Albania had been linked in the past.

"The Titoites, the Soviet revisionists and those of the countries of Eastern Europe, and Mao Zedong's China had ulterior, hostile, enslaving aims. We tore the mask from them and told them bluntly that Albania was not for sale for a handful of rags, or for a few rubles, dinars or yuan."

REUTERS (*Vienna*)

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admitted to the Party. He lives in the city of Elbasan, described in pre-war (any war) travelogues as "a most delightful oriental place, full of mosques and picteresque houses . . . ." He served us (as always) in the VIP room of the hotel restaurant, and I questioned him about the strength of religious feeling in his native city of famous mosques and great traditions. "I don't care for religion. It was a weapon of obscurantism. What do we need it for? We have our Party. Why then should we need religion?" (He was an alert young Communist, countering quickly with orthodox answers.)

Nevertheless, in parks or on the streets I saw quite a few old men running Moslem prayer-beads through their fingers. It is generally conceded that some religious feelings still linger on among "the older generation"—but then only 7% of the population is over 60, and 37% are under 15.

"We are indeed something of a paradox. The Albanians are among the oldest inhabitants of the Balkans and even Europe, yet we're one of the youngest nations. Do you know that the average age of our population is a mere 26? We speak with a certain pride about our young Albania, with its ancient cultural roots." This came from Professor Aleks Buda, an historian and President of the Academy of Science. The 73-year-old scholar, who spent most of the inter-War period in Salzburg and Vienna, ridiculed Western reports about religious persecution, and repeated the 19th-century poet Vashko Pase's famous line: "the religion of the Albanian is Albanianism."

IN THIS SPIRIT of intense, simplistic, tautologous nationalism the younger generation is educated. No wonder that, along with "modern revisionists" and "imperialists", the Pope (who twice within a year publicly referred to the plight of the Albanian Catholics) is a target of vituperative attack. At dinner one night in Gjirokaster, one of my escorts (Illi Pepo, the 30-year-old Deputy Director of Albanian TV) suddenly burst out: "I profoundly despise the Pope!"

"But why?"

"He must know that there is no God! It's all pretence! He's an actor and nothing more. . . ."

Others at the table, evidently ill at ease, moved swiftly to safer ground. A young journalist, Beskin Kaltani, related that though his parents were of the Bektashi Muslim sect, he had married a girl from an Orthodox family. In contrast, my interpreter Sokol Mici, of Orthodox origins, chose a wife with a Moslem background. "My father was a Communist official, so it didn't matter to my parents. . . . But my grandmother was rather upset. But, of course, the relics of religion are no longer an issue. . . ."

And what about ethnicity? Does it matter any longer whether someone is a Gheg or a Tosk? The historic people, the Ghegs—primarily highlanders living in the mountains north of the Skumbin River which cuts through Central Albania—spoke a distinct dialect, and were proud of their warrior tradition. They were mainly Muslim, although some tribes remained Catholic, and Moslem Ghegs form the great majority of the 1.9 million Albanians across the border in Yugoslavia. The plainsmen of the south, who spoke the Tosk dialect, were traditionally more open to foreign, mainly Greek and Italian, influences. They constituted in the past the bulk of landless and subsistence-level peasants; they lived in villages rather than in isolated homesteads as in the north, and were economically and socially ruled by Muslim beys under the old Ottoman feudal system. The great Gheg chieftains from Skanderbeg to Ahmed Zogu led the movements for independence and statehood, but Enver Hoxha and most (if not all) of the Communist leaders came from the south. And it is the Tosk dialect which was chosen as the basis for the single literary language under Communism.

Enver's People

ENVER HOXHA may have stamped out much of the colour and diversity of an old land's traditions; but, no doubt about it, he forged an independent nation out of a medley of tribes, clans and regional strongholds. In the eyes of an overwhelmingly young generation which has known no other leader, Enver Hoxha is a kind of ersatz deity. On my travels, visiting factories, offices, schools, and homes, "Enver" was everywhere, in word and picture.

Gigantic letters carved into mountain sides eulogise "*Parti-Enver*"; stones carefully laid out in meadows proclaim "*Rrofte Shoku Enver Hoxha* (Long live Comrade Enver Hoxha!)." Huge frescoes set in the outer walls of buildings always show the beloved leader, impeccably dressed in waistcoat and tie, sometimes with a hat in his hand, sometimes with arm raised in clenched-fist salute—and his 14-feet-high bronze statue greets the visitor in the marble entrance hall of the new National Museum in Tirana. Portraits of him dominate the permanent exhibition in the National Gallery. The house where he was born (on 16 October 1908), in Gjirokaster in the south, had already been converted into a museum by 1966, and was further enlarged in 1983 as a tribute to his 75th birthday. It is today such a vast complex that its Director had visible difficulty in explaining away the opulence of a supposedly revolutionary family in a poverty-stricken and remote Ottoman province at the beginning of the century. He showed us the pistols, boots, and fountain pens of the great leader (all in a glass case and supposedly used during the Partisan struggle), and took pains to assure us, repeatedly, that two dozen relatives of the Hoxha family had lived in the now extensive premises.

In Tirana, Gjirokaster, and Kruja (Skanderbeg's stronghold, where another costly new museum has been erected), hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren, students, soldiers and groups from factories and farms are every year made aware of the continuity from "Skanderbeg to Enver." Next to

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a statue of the great medieval chieftain with replicas of his helmet and sword (the originals are in Vienna) the visitor can study the relevant lines from Enver Hoxha's *Collected Works*, spread out under glass. The 42 volumes evidently provide the basis for the Party line on every major international and domestic issue from the Bronze to the Space Age. During my stay, his latest book—*Among the Simple People*, memoirs of his youth and the early War years—was published in a first printing of 75,000. (In ratio to the Albanian population, this is equivalent in Britain to a circulation of 1.5 m. for a hard-cover copy of, say, the memoirs of Harold Wilson.)

Quotations from Hoxha's books accompany Albanians from cradle to grave. An all-out population growth is obviously part of his vision of their future: at a time of desperate world-wide attempts to curb the birth rate, Albania is a country with an officially encouraged population explosion. It already boasts a birth rate of four times the European average, but abortions are banned, maternity leave is prolonged, and large families are held up as models. (I did find imported Italian contraceptives at a chemist in Gjirokaster, but clearly their use is not widely encouraged.) Small wonder that the annual population growth is 2.4%, and that by the year 2000 Albania's population should jump to 4 m. from the present 2.9 m.

Even the casual visitor, walking the main streets not only of Tirana, but also smaller towns like Korca, Kavaja, Elbasan, Shkoder, and Bureli, is struck by the sheer number of people squatting, strolling, sitting, and, in the midday heat, stretched out under the trees on country roads. It may well be true, in Marxist-Leninist terms, that there is "no unemployment" in this best-of-all-possible socialist worlds; but there is certainly a very great deal of visible loafing and massively obvious overmanning.

THIS IMPRESSION OF "too many people", of being "crowded", is particularly poignant because of the total lack of road traffic. Albanians are of necessity walkers, and the entire country is an immense pedestrian zone. On my first morning in the (Mussolini-built) Dajti Hotel on the "Boulevard of the Heroes of the Nation" in the centre of Tirana, I was woken by the sound of shuffling feet. Below my window people were walking to work, or cycling along the tree-lined boulevard with its colossal statues of Stalin and Lenin on either side. In no city in Albania did I see any traffic lights. I recalled how Joseph Roth, the great Austrian novelist, had described—in June 1927, in a piece for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*—the unforgettable scene of an Albanian policeman, in whiter-than-white cotton gloves, standing erect in the middle of the boulevard in Tirana awaiting the traffic. Today, almost 60 years later, the policeman, now dressed in Chinese-style blue uniform, with a blue cap but definitely no gloves, is still at the main crossroads in Tirana, still waiting.

The pastoral air of Albanian towns is also due to the fact that no citizen may own a private car. Public transport within the city consisted of a few decrepit buses—people from the countryside (two-thirds are still rural), transported from various pick-up points, reach their places of work mostly by lorry. The first railway tracks were laid after World War II; even today the entire single-track network runs for only 200 miles. The trains, moving at a maximum speed of 20-to-25 miles per hour, connect a few urban centres. The antiquated trucks seemed to be of mixed origin—"balkanised" (dare one say?) from a Chinese chassis, a Czech engine, an East German gear-box, Russian headlights, and Albanian spare parts. They rattle down the middle of winding mountainous roads—an unnerving sight. Things become even more perilous when at dawn or at twilight they are loaded with anything up to 30 persons (standing room only).

On the outskirts of the bigger towns, and along the beautiful country lanes, traffic is largely confined to oxen- and horse-drawn carts, or to pack-donkeys. Driving along the main road from the south to Tirana via Durres, in the early afternoon, I compiled what must be one of the most reliable statistical surveys of Albanian traffic. Between the towns of Lushnja and Kavaje, over a distance of 22 miles, we counted in both directions: 68 bicycles, 51 lorries, 20 oxen- or horse-drawn carts, a couple of buses, and 47 donkeys (some with, some without an accompanying pedestrian); but only three passenger cars. A similar spot-check a few days later, between the resort town of Pogrades on the Orchid Lake and the city of Korca near the Greek border, yielded roughly similar figures.

All the more startling was the sight of a lone and gleaming Mercedes parked on a deserted street leading from the centre of Durres to the port, next to (where else?) a large statue of Stalin. "It is the official limousine of Comrade *X*, the Party Secretary of Durres district who is also a member of the *Politburo* of the Party", my interpreter remarked respectfully. Similar black Mercedes—the symbols of conspicuous consumption—were to be found outside government buildings and the "Association of the Albanian War Veterans" in Tirana and at Party Headquarters in the town of Kavaje. But I should add that Ministers have French Peugeot "505s" as official cars, while the middle-ranking directors of various Socialist institutions have to be satisfied with humble Polski Fiats. As for distinguished foreign guests, they are driven around in 1971 Swedish Volvos.

HOW MANY CARS ARE THERE in Albania? What a sociological-mechanical problem to get involved in! A local journalist in one of the 26 administrative districts confided to me that in his area, with a population of some 60,000, around 250 passenger cars were registered—all of them, of course, official vehicles. This would mean, we proceeded to calculate, that in the whole country there could be no more than 8-10,000 cars on the roads. Lest statisticians scoff, I concede that this is only a rough estimate. The information about the cars in the district was "strictly confidential"; and Albania is, in any case, a country of percentages. The number of cars is quite as much a state secret as the figures for oil or paper production, the grain harvest, the tomato crop, in fact any other economic data. During a long conversation with Pajtim Ajazi (the 38-year-old Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade) about the changes in "the structure of exports" and other such details, I was unable to lure from him

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even an approximate aggregate figure for foreign trade. "I'll have to look it up", he said (in fluent German). But neither during my stay nor afterwards was I given this or any related bit of information.

This is standard practice. Alone in the Communist world, the annual Plan or draft Budget submitted to the rubber-stamp parliament contains only percentages; no absolute figures are given, except for the number of flats they claim to have built. All you get in the unending flood of self-congratulatory statistics is statements such as: "Today the industrial output of the entire year 1938 is produced in two days", or "The number of workers has been increased 38.1 times and fruit production 8.1 times since 1938." In reporting this I would not want to dispute the progress made in general; for example, in the electrification of the country, and particularly in combating infant mortality, doubling the average expectation of life to 70 years, reducing illiteracy, containing epidemics, and raising the elementary standard of living for the poorest sections of the population. One should not forget that Albania, at the time of the First World War, was assessed in the first scholarly survey compiled by Austro-Hungarian experts as "lagging 100 years behind even backward Bosnia." But not even Albanians can live by statistics alone, especially when for their base-year they look back half-a-century. . . .

In Korca, probably the most advanced of all the Albanian towns, I was taken during the evening to visit the Trajani family. The father is a driver who shares a pre-War house with his wife, his two sons, and their wives and children. The brothers (Perro aged 32, and Gyergy aged 30) work in the nearby UIK, a precision-instruments factory, and earn as skilled workers 730 and 640 leks respectively. (Sonja, Perro's wife, works in the same factory and brings home 650 leks a month, while Tefta, a salesgirl, earns 460 leks). As I learned next morning when I visited the factory, the Trajanis have been praised several times on TV and in the media as "worthy models", and their wages clearly belong in the higher bracket. The average wage in the factory is between 400 and 600 leks, according to seniority. They work eight hours a day, six days a week. Their annual holiday? Two weeks.

But what can they buy with their money? A man's suit costs between 580 to 750 leks; a pair of shoes 130 to 175; plastic sandals 75, a woman's dress between 190 and 240. For a kilo of rice (the staple diet) one has to pay 8 leks; a kilo of much coveted lamb or beef costs 14 to 18. To purchase a bicycle of the simplest design, Gyergy had to work for six weeks. Luxury items such as a black-and-white TV set (assembled from imported parts) or a fridge (made in Yugoslavia under West German licence) costs 4,000 to 4,500 leks—the equivalent for a Trajani brother of six or seven months' wages. The less fortunate women, working in the same plant, earn between 430 to 500 leks a month, so for them the picture is even bleaker. To buy a kilo of meat, they have to work a whole day; for a pair of shoes a week; for a pullover a fortnight.

Prices are, however, only part of the story. Quality and choice—and, above all, availability—are if anything even more important in everyday Albanian life. During my stay I saw no TV sets, fridges or washing-machines in the shops; such consumer durables are allocated solely through an internal distribution system. Would-be purchasers, carefully selected in factories and offices, are allocated numbers, and delivery is announced in the newspapers. Uniform clothing, with only a few models, colours, and patterns, is—need I add?—the inevitable result of rigidly centralised Stalin-type planning. One day I witnessed the storming of a store on Boulevard Stalin in Tirana by women who had heard rumours of a new delivery. Policemen and plain-clothes security agents tried to keep the crowds from forcing their way through locked doors. A week or so later when I happened to be visiting the same store, I realised that, contrary to the efforts of my escorts to depict "the storm" as something very unusual, such scenes are not uncommon. Some of the plate-glass show-cases had been smashed, and there was still glass all over the floor. Uniformed policemen were stationed behind various counters, as frightened sales-girls brusquely turned customers away. The régime may well have "cut prices 16 times since 1950", as it incessantly claims; but the point is that the cheap and shoddy goods of obsolete design offered for sale are no longer wanted even here.

As far as I could judge, no one goes hungry or barefoot in Albania. The supply of staple foods, vegetables and fruit is certainly better than what I found available in Romania or Poland, say, or in many parts of Soviet Russia. The weak point, as almost everywhere east of the Elbe (except for Hungary), seems to be meat.

The mystery of the vanishing meat haunted us during most of our Albanian journey. Having been told in a startlingly empty butcher's shop in Durres that everything was "sold out", I asked repeatedly to be taken to a butcher in another town. Official Albanian interpreters act as a very special kind of filter, pretending to be informal (and even confidential), yet subtly guiding or rather isolating their guests from real life, wherever it was. In short, you have to find out everything for yourself—but then you are virtually never left alone. In Saranda in the south when, in final desperation, I asked the hotel receptionist for the nearest butcher, I noticed that he and my escorts exchanged glances, as if in this puritanical

Gold Fingers

Washington D.C.

France has been *holding talks with the Albanians on returning £136 million in gold to Albania in exchange for the settlement of property claims with France, Britain, and the United States. Neither Washington nor London has diplomatic ties with Tirana, but Paris does and is thus negotiating on behalf of all three nations.*

The gold, the Albanian national treasure, was taken to Rome in World War II by the Italian Occupation authorities, then looted by German troops in 1943, and eventually stashed in a salt mine in Germany. It is now in the Bank of England.

The New York Times

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country with "no night life" and "absolutely no prostitution" I had asked the way to the nearest sex-shop or strip-tease show. I rose early the next day, but at 8.30 a.m. the butcher's had already closed. A few days later I managed, one early morning, to find a butcher in Tirana who was "just about to close."

A sales-girl revealed to me at long last the great secret: meat is usually delivered to the shops around three p.m., but sales to the public start only at five o'clock the next morning. That afternoon, triumphant, I witnessed the delivery of 150 kilos of chicken and 100 kilos of pork, already cut up and packed in plastic bags. (Alas for the Albanians, who traditionally prefer lamb and beef.) By 4.30 a.m. the following day, long queues had already formed (men and women separately) in front of otherwise forlorn shops. Within an hour or so the meagre rations had vanished, and the shoppers were on their way home before setting off to work.

HOME IN TIRANA means crowded living quarters in housing complexes which to Western eyes seem very close to "subsistence level." Many of the buildings have no proper façades. Tirana became the capital of independent Albania only in 1920, and was described on the eve of the last War as "a wretched overgrown village of 25,000 consisting mainly of mud buildings and one bazaar." Today the bazaar has vanished, and the city boasts 200,000 inhabitants. In general, two families share small two- or at most three-room flats in hastily erected apartment houses. Such heating as there may be is primitive, and even new dwellings have only wood-fired stoves. Those lucky enough to have a balcony use it mainly for storing logs.

Apart from the select few—"the new class" (in Djilas's sense)—most Albanians seem to live modestly. Egalitarianism is the guiding principle not only in housing but also in incomes policy. It is proudly claimed that the ratio between the highest and the lowest incomes has been reduced from 1-2.5 in the 1970s to 1-2 now. Let me give you two examples. The first, Bukurosh Stafa, at the age of 32 is chief engineer of the country's largest industrial plant, the steel complex at Elbasan. Ten months ago, after spending almost three years at the University of Grenoble, he took over the difficult job of reconstructing the Chinese-built plant which with a total labour force of 10,000 produces annually less than 250,000 tons of steel. He earns 1,100 leks a month (the minimum wage of a worker in the steel mill is 570 leks). And in Tirana's largest printing plant (with a staff of 700) the 44-year-old director, Sirim Ruka, earns 900 leks; while a printer gets 750 and even the young woman stapling pages together takes home 540. At the hydroelectric plant now going up on the River Drin at Koman in the north, the deputy director in charge of close to 3,000 men earns 950 leks, while a lorry driver makes 900 and an electrician 800. To complete the picture, a goat-herd we spoke to at Butrint, on the Albanian side of the Corfu Channel, told us that he earned 600 leks, only 50 less than my interpreter. A full professor receives a salary of 1,200 (the same as a Deputy Minister), while Mrs Themie Thomai, Minister of Agriculture, told me that her salary was 1,400. Even allowing (in some cases) for perks such as official cars, occasional trips abroad, etc., this is certainly a country (as the Oxford economist Michael Kaser once put it) "with the most extreme egalitarianism ever enforced as national policy in Europe. . . ."

Sirim Ruka, for example, told me that he gets his fixed salary regardless of the printing plant's output. Even the best workers can pocket, at most, only a 5% bonus. If work-norms are overfulfilled, they will automatically be raised. Instead of material incentives, posters and banners continuously urge the workers to do their utmost:

> "Workers and cadres, mobilise all your forces and demand results for the realisation of economic tasks!"
>
> "Long live our heroic working class!"
>
> "Comrade Workers and Cadres, express your opinion as to how a realistic, mobilising and revolutionary plan can speedily be drawn up!"

"Shirkers" were castigated publicly, their names blazoned on posters for all to see.

The Great Stalin

AFTER VISITING A number of factories (manufacturing textiles, steel, glass, various instruments) as well as agricultural establishments, I came away with the conviction that Albania's economic system must be pure and vintage "Stalinism in practice." As Professor Hasan Banja (director of the Economics Institute of the Academy of Science) put it to me: "We reject not only capitalism, but also all varieties of modern revisionism, both the Yugoslav brand of self-management and Soviet-type revisionist deviations from Marxism-Leninism." And this, after all, should not be surprising since Stalin's busts and statues can be seen in every town. The only "Stalin Museum" in the world (except in his native town of Gori) exists in Tirana. I was told by its youthful director, Mrs Lutfie Zemeli, that 40,000 visit it yearly. She proudly added that in 1979, the hundredth anniversary of Stalin's birth, as many as 60,000 visitors had seen the displays. In the last room a quotation from Enva Hoxha reminds the departing visitor what to think about this particular hero:

> "Stalin was and is a great revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist."

This must surely be the only country in the Communist world where towns and streets are still named after Stalin and his birthday is celebrated annually with public festivities. The attractive young guide in the National Museum, a 24-year-old university graduate, ticked me off when I referred to the dic-

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tator merely as "Stalin." "For us he is *the Great Stalin.*" She takes her cue from Enver, who in his memoirs pours scorn on every other Marxist leader from Tito to Mao, but becomes quite lyrical when referring to Stalin:

> "He was no tyrant, no despot, but a man of principle, just, modest, and very kind and considerate to the people, to the cadres, and to his comrades. . . ."

Enver has fond memories of Stalin, who saved his political life in the midst of a ferocious power-battle at the time of the break with Tito in 1948. In the true Stalinist spirit of "kindliness to the cadres" he instituted a bloody purge of the Titoists in the Albanian leadership. In the immediate post-War period Albania was *de facto* a sub-satellite of Communist Yugoslavia, and indeed Tito planned to incorporate Albania as a seventh constituent republic. After the break with Yugoslavia, Albania became an ally of its Soviet protector, but Soviet-Albanian relations soured in the late 1950s after Nikita Khrushchev's "de-Stalinisation" campaign and his moves to heal the rift with Tito. The Sino-Soviet split in 1961 gave the wily Albanian leader a welcome opportunity to break with Moscow and exchange Soviet support for Chinese aid. The rupture with Peking occurred in the late 1970s, once again over the issue of Yugoslavia, when Enver Hoxha accused Mao and his successors of betraying "true Leninism." Henceforth Albania remained the sole beacon of "real socialism" in the world.

The price paid for such ideological purity is high. The hotels I stayed in (outside Tirana), the radios in the guest-rooms, the machinery in the weaving and spinning mills, and the paper, glass and steel plants were all built or delivered by China. Thousands of Chinese experts helped the tiny outpost on the Adriatic, where once there had been Soviet and East European specialists.

When the Albanians proudly state that they never accept foreign credits (and that this is specified even in their Constitution), the Yugoslav media gleefully point out that Albania, per head of the population, in fact has higher foreign debts than most. In all, the tiny country had received well over 5 billion dollars of aid from its erstwhile protectors (the debt, however, has been conveniently written off by the borrower). When I talked with officials—Deputy Foreign Minister Sokrat Plaka and the 36-year-old editor-in-chief of the Party paper *Zeri i Popullit* ("The Voice of The People") Arshi Xhezo—they vehemently denied that Albania owed anybody anything, and claimed that it was actually Albania which had helped China, through massive deliveries of oil and chromium ore. (Who exploited whom, in the Marxian family of non-exploitation?)

Whatever the truth of the matter, factories with Chinese-made equipment, agriculture with thousands of Chinese tractors, and transport with Chinese buses and lorries have all been running into increasingly serious difficulties. The need for spare parts and replacement machinery can't be covered by the various Albanian workshops set up to produce needed components. At the textile mill in Berat, in the printing plant in Tirana, in the instrument factory in Korca, every second or third machine is idle or is being taken to pieces by mechanics. "They are overhauled every two years", I was told, but the testimony of my eyes was stronger than the lame explanations.

ALBANIA'S POLICY OF absolute self-reliance was made possible in the first place by the richness of its natural resources. The country is endowed with oil (Western estimates put the annual output at 2.6 m. tons); chromium (third-largest producer in the world, exporting 800,000 to 1 m. tons); ferro-nickel, copper, coal and bitumen.

At the same time, the combination of rigid Stalinist policies and a population explosion has posed a serious long-term threat to farming, which provides 30% of exports and has crucial importance for the economy. Agriculture is completely collectivised—Albania, in contrast to all other Communist countries, has successively reduced the so-called "private plots" of collective farmers to a mere 1,000 square metres. Worse still, the peasants have been forced to give up their livestock to the collective. I talked to farmers' families in the small village of Biranj near Korca, and was told that they no longer had animals, but had to rely on getting milk and dairy products from the collective farm. Collectivisation means also that Albania has totally abolished the market, where in the past private produce could be sold. Even more worrying must be the fact that population growth is outstripping the pace of reclamation of arable land. Through massive terracing, irrigation and drainage, the cultivated area has doubled since 1950. Nevertheless, arable land per head declined by 10% during the same period.

From early morning till late afternoon all over the country one sees brigades of women working in the fields. They form the visible pillars of Albanian agriculture; men are seen rarely, and then mainly in the driving-seats of East German combine-harvesters (naturally, these are called "*Fortschritt*" —Progress). Do such scenes suggest that women are still regarded as second-class citizens? Pre-War Albania was a country where the conventional wisdom had it that "A woman must work harder than a donkey, for a donkey feeds on grass, while a woman lives on bread . . . a woman is a beast of burden." Margaret Hasluk, a long-time British resident in the country, reported in the 1930s that wives "not infrequently led a life of almost unrelieved hardship and could not eat at the same table with the men. . . ."

THOSE TIMES ARE irrevocably gone. The 40-year-old Mrs Themie Thomai, for example, has been Minister of Agriculture since 1976. She started life as a farm-labourer, and later studied at the Agrarian College in Tirana. After graduation she worked as an economist and at the age of 27 was president of a model collective farm with 4,000 members. "I am sure that we will resolve the meat problem in the same way as we became self-sufficient in grain five years ago", she said, brimming with self-confidence. And the emancipation of women? Mrs Thomai quickly gave me the statistics: "About half the students, 46% of the active people, 59% of the labour force on the farms, 74% in the textile industry—are women. One in three Party and State func-

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tionaries is a woman. And in the Government there are three women Ministers (Education and Light Industry, in addition to myself) out of a total of fifteen. Last but not least, 400 Collective Farm chairpersons are women. We still have a lot to do in fighting patriarchal customs, but thanks to Enver we have achieved an historic victory in liberating our Albanian women. . . ."

Tirana University provided evidence of her words. About 50% of the 8,000 registered students (as Professor Osman Kraja, the Chancellor, told me) are female, and I met women post-graduate students and professors. The university building, erected by the Italians, had originally housed Mussolini's youth organisation—the University itself began to operate only in 1957, and between 1976-84 the number of students had doubled.

After the Communist seizure of power, many Albanian students were assigned to the Soviet Union and other East European countries. Though Albania maintains neither diplomatic nor even commercial relations with Moscow, many of the leading officials—including Hoxha's heir presumptive, Ramiz Alia—studied in the Soviet Union and speak fluent Russian. After the break with Khrushchev, thousands promptly went to study in China (between 1960-1977), and this uncomradely series of broken friendships has, I found, produced some odd results. Try and speak with the Director-General of Albania's TV and radio, and you find he can manage only in Russian. The head of the "international department" of the same institution had spent seven years in China, but his mastery of Chinese was not much help in dealing with his European and African visitors. I found German useful, even though my interpreter had learned his German in Peking.

Now Albania is sending some of its students to the West. I met a young engineer who had just returned from post-graduate studies in Sweden. Most of the 100 or so Albanian students abroad go to France and Sweden, with a few in Italy and Austria. No doubt about it, in terms of access to education the Hoxha régime has certainly achieved a breakthrough. An impressive network of schools at all levels has produced obvious results, even if the textbooks are imbued with the peculiar Communist ideology of the system.

Still, simple contrasts between past and present are not altogether relevant. Despite its admittedly unattractive facets, King Zog's much-maligned rule was definitely more liberal with regard to freedom of movement: pre-War Albania, with a third of the present population, boasted about four times as many young people studying abroad. Enver Hoxha was a case in point. He spent six years in France and Belgium, busying himself mostly with revolutionary activities, but he was allowed to return to Albania, and even taught French at the *lycée* in Korca.

TODAY FOREIGN TRAVEL is perhaps the greatest single privilege. Apart from carefully-screened students, diplomats,

Eagles & Stars: Amnesty Reports . . .

POLITICAL *prisoners in Albania are held in solitary confinement, frequently beaten to extract confessions, and are not allowed a lawyer to defend them in court, according to "Albania: Political Imprisonment and the Law", a report by Amnesty International released on 12 December 1984. The report, which admits it is incomplete because of the lack of information from Albania, says that Amnesty has never known of an acquittal in a political trial there.*

Albania's penal system is described in the criminal code (introduced on 1 October 1977) as

"a means of coercion of a political and ideological character used by the socialist state in the class struggle . . . a powerful weapon of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the struggle against its enemies. . . . The rights of citizens are inseparable from the fulfilment of their duties and cannot be exercised in opposition to the socialist order."

The death penalty may be imposed in peacetime for a number of non-violent political offences, including "flight from the state". Provisions defining political offences are loosely formulated, and this facilitates their broad interpretation by the courts.

"A conscript from the north of the country was sentenced in Shkoder in 1981 to eight years' imprisonment after he had been charged with having spoken favourably to fellow conscripts about King Zog.

Charges of having engaged in 'anti-state agitation and propaganda' have included accusations that defendants had listened to foreign radio stations. Albanians who watch or listen to Italian, Greek or Yugoslav radio and television broadcasts tend to be regarded with suspicion by the authorities.

A former prisoner sentenced to nine years' imprisonment in 1980 (but now outside the country) has stated that the charges against him included allegations that he had watched a Yugoslav television programme containing anti-Albanian propaganda—the programme was a televised football match, he said.

One former prisoner alleges that he was punished by three months' solitary confinement in the early 1980s after he had tattooed an eagle without an accompanying Communist Red Star on his body."

In recent years Albanians have reportedly been convicted of "anti-state agitation and propaganda" as a result of their contacts with foreign tourists, or for possessing books or works of art officially disapproved of.

AMNESTY HAS THE NAMES *of 400 political prisoners held in the past 14 years but believes the figure to represent only a fraction of all political prisoners.*

The report gives details of the Spac labour camp where prisoners are forced to mine copper and are housed in unheated concrete barracks, about 300-400 prisoners a unit. Prisoners there commonly suffer a severe loss of weight and the diet is deficient in protein and fruit. Even the sick are forced to work eight hours a day, six days a week and frequently seven.

Internment may be imposed by a court as a supplementary penalty to imprisonment. Probably the largest number of people affected by administratively imposed internment are members of families who have incurred the disapproval of the authorities, often because their relatives have fled abroad. In many such cases families have been deported to areas far from their homes, in order to carry out land reclamation work, particularly on the coastal marshes . .

THE TIMES/AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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and a handful of trusted Party-line intellectuals, no one is allowed to leave the country, even on personal invitation from close relatives. I found it dispiriting to talk to people in their forties (directors of regional radio studios, factory managers, or foremen of agricultural enterprises) and learn that they had never been out of their own country.

Nor is foreign tourism exactly a growth industry, despite the hundreds of miles of unspoiled beaches. Only some 5,000 to 6,000 foreign tourists (in groups, under the tight supervision of experienced "guides") are allowed to cross the border. "For us tourism is not simply a source of revenue; it is a bridge of friendship between peoples. And of course we don't want to expose our people to the poisonous fruits of bourgeois society. . . ." This was how a young film director summarised the Albanian view of tourism. I suspect he knew something of the dangers lurking behind Western contacts; he had just come back from a fortnight at the Cannes TV-film festival.

ARE THERE REAL SIGNS of a slow "opening to the West"? A rail link with Yugoslavia, between Shkoder and Titograd in Montenegro, has been completed on the Albanian side. Due to Yugoslav difficulties, however, it will go into operation only in 1985, instead of 1983 as planned. A ferry connection three times a month between Durres and Trieste did start up in the autumn of 1983, but it transports only farm produce for Western markets. For the time being, therefore, first-hand impressions of the strange world outside Albania can be gleaned only from television.

And this is one of the most startling of paradoxes. The harshest and most isolated Communist régime allows—indeed even facilitates, through a relay station—the smooth reception of Italian television newscasts (three times a day in Tirana), while Albanians living on the coast can generally pick up Greek or Italian TV. We know from Enver Hoxha's memoirs that he is himself an avid viewer; and informants say that access to Italian television transmissions was due to his personal decision.

There is, however, a hitch. The TV screen I had been watching went blank when a picture of Pope John Paul II appeared. The same milky censorship occurred in other programmes when religious ceremonies or erotic scenes were shown. I thought I might be going too far when I asked the Director-General of the TV corporation about this, but he confirmed nonchalantly that "there is always someone on duty", switching off transmissions in accord with a precise list of taboo subjects. It was all very diplomatic. "You must realise that our people would not understand if we let them see religious ceremonies. . . ."

The electronic age came to the Sons of the Eagle in the early 1970s. Today there are 200,000 to 300,000 black-and-white TV sets (the two different figures came from two different TV officials). Some 20,000 new sets are being assembled from imported parts in a plant at Durres, and experimental colour-TV broadcasts are due to start this year. Like the three daily newspapers, the local television programme—I watched two half-hour prime-time newscasts—is dominated by optimistic home news about "plan fulfilment" (and overfulfilment), heroic toilers, successful harvests, great strides in education, and performances by folkloristic ensembles singing songs in praise of the Party and the Leader. A bit of foreign news came only at the end. For four or five minutes Albanians can hear gruesome items about massive unemployment, the ravages of inflation, violent demonstrations, and dastardly preparations for war by both superpowers in an awful and crisis-ridden outside world.

I am, however, pleased to report one all-important respite from the propaganda barrage: soccer. During my stay the European soccer championships were in full swing in France. Astonishingly enough, every night Albanian television broadcast all the matches in their entirety, taken live from Italian TV and translated simultaneously into Albanian. Their national team may not have qualified for the finals, but the entire Albanian population in the towns I passed through appeared to be glued to a TV screen. In Durres and Lusnja, let alone Tirana, the streets were totally deserted—and all the conversation was of football.

Apart from this special treat, Albanians are faced with the grim duty of reading what must surely be the dullest newspapers even in the Communist world. No point asking or searching: foreign papers, even "revisionist" East European journals, were simply not available. In the two main hotels in Tirana, desperate Western businessmen or official visitors with no reading material of their own must turn to the selected volumes of Hoxha's memoirs in English, French, Italian, Spanish and German editions, all neatly laid out on the cashier's desk. I sat on the terrace of the Hotel Dajti restaurant one evening, and observed a Hungarian engineer, sent from Budapest to sell electric switches, gloomily leafing through a newly-published study of "Counter-revolution within Counter-revolution in Poland."

WHAT TO DO between Thursday noon and Monday morning? Since no planes leave, visitors without a car are virtually imprisoned in the capital, and Tirana is not exactly equipped for a lively weekend of social life or cocktail parties. As for friendly embassies, there are altogether only sixteen missions, counting those from the Eastern bloc and the Third World. Of the Western countries, only France, Italy, Greece and Turkey have permanent ambassadors. Formally, of course, the Albanians correctly claim diplomatic relations with some 100 states, but most of these are only symbolically represented, by envoys permanently stationed in Belgrade or in Athens. Apart from the theatre in Tirana's Palace of Culture (take your pick of revolutionary or patriotic ballet and opera), the casual visitor can enjoy "night life" only in the usually empty bars in the two main hotels, where a trio, or sometimes a quartet, plays old tunes for the occasional Austrian lorry-driver, a small group of West German engineers, and a couple of newly arrived diplomats or foreign guests. But here or elsewhere I could detect no social contact with Albanians outside office hours or an official arrangement.

Do all Albanians go to bed early? As soon as darkness falls, the visitor is struck by the silence of streets which earlier were teeming with thousands of pedestrians. Walking along the

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empty main boulevard leading off Skanderbeg Square in Tirana, I was double aware of the armed guards (guns at the ready) surrounding on all sides the Party Headquarters. Next to it, behind thick shrubs, is an even more closely guarded compound where Enver Hoxha and some of his closest associates live in modern villas. Although I could see no barbed wire, the entire area is closed to traffic, and pedestrians are kept at a distance, indeed are waved on menacingly by armed soldiers and plain-clothes policemen if they should dare to stop or stare. As a matter of fact, everything from the closely guarded Ministry of Interior to Hoxha's residence, from the government and parliament building to King Zog's erstwhile palace (now serving as the seat of the Academy of Sciences), is concentrated on and around the "Boulevard of the Heroes of the Nation", the Albanian *Champs Elysées* designed by Mussolini's architects, within a stone's throw of the Dajti, the pre-War hotel built for foreigners.

Are the guards (as some say) trigger-happy? One hears of the tragic case of the young French diver, Jean-Marie Masselin of the Club Mediterranée, who was shot through the head last June when his boat came too close to the Albanian coast in the narrow Corfu Channel. Certainly the Albanians are subjected to an atmosphere of permanent militarisation. Throughout the country, I continually came across two characteristic quotes from Enver Hoxha:

> "The Albanian people hacked their way through history sword in hand!"

and

> "We are now building socialism with a pick in one hand, a rifle in the other."

BY ANY STANDARDS, whether in per capita terms or relative size of population, Albania's militarism in budget and in sheer numbers is way ahead of its prosperous neighbours'. Military training starts in the schools, for both boys and girls. All able-bodied Albanians (men until 50, women until 35) do reserve training every year (one to three weeks). In no Communist country (and I have visited a dozen or so) have I seen so many soldiers. (One of the few relics of the era of "the Chinese connection" is the absence of designations of rank for both the army and the police). Maintaining under arms some 53,000 men (including paramilitary forces), in addition to the thousands of *Sigurimi*'s secret-police agents, must be an excessive burden on the meagre resources of the poorest country in Europe.

To this must be added the considerable costs of constructing the tens of thousands of concrete pillboxes which one sees all over the land. Recently an Albanian official proudly told a Western businessman, who doubted the wisdom of such beehives in the space-and-missile age, that they were going to build a "new generation" of even larger shelters, able to withstand even nuclear attacks. According to Western estimates, previous expenditure on the small fortifications must have cost the equivalent of 2% of net GNP. London's International Institute of Strategic Studies estimates that, due to the lack of spare parts, the *MiG* fighter-planes and fast torpedo-boats supplied by China are probably partly or perhaps largely unserviceable—perhaps luckily for the hard-pressed people. At any rate, during my stay I saw only one plane actually in the air.

There are some 100 officially-listed combat aircraft, and it could be they were taking turns. . . .

Balance of Uncertainty

IS THIS almost paranoiac fear of intruders totally without foundation? Paradoxically, Albania—the only country in Eastern Europe where the Communists won both the national-liberation struggle and the civil war on their own (albeit with massive Anglo-American help), with no Soviet troops ever entering the national territory—was also the only country where, in 1949-52, the US and British Intelligence Services undertook a major covert operation to overthrow the régime. We know, now, that Kim Philby betrayed the operation, and hundreds of anti-Communist Albanians (parachuted in, or landed along the coast) were instantly caught and killed by Albanian security forces. As recently as July 1982 a small group of five exiles was said to have undertaken a landing. The men were killed within hours, but the background to this operation has still not been clarified.

I suspect that the abortive landing may well have been a part of the most dramatic conflict within the Albanian leadership since the Communist seizure of power. The loser was Mehmet Shehu, "Number Two" in Tirana and for over three decades Hoxha's closest collaborator. A cryptic official statement announced that Prime Minister Shehu had committed suicide during a nervous breakdown on 18 December 1981. Only eleven months later, on 20 November 1982, did Hoxha himself reveal in a speech that the man who had been his Prime Minister for 27 years and who was officially credited with heroically saving his life during the War, had in fact all along been "a super-multiple agent." Shehu, previously lavishly praised for his loyalty and fighting spirit in the dozens of volumes of Hoxha's works, was now presented as a dastardly spy since his early youth, working successively for the American, British, Yugoslav, and Soviet Intelligence Services. Shehu's "gang" apparently included the Ministers of Defence, Interior, and Foreign Affairs. This could only mean that, taking into account a series of earlier purges carrried out by Hoxha, since World War II all the key figures in charge of security, diplomacy, and the army as well as the Cabinet had been "imperialist" or "revisionist" agents.

Miracle of miracles, Hoxha survived the plots. According to his account in *The Titoites,* Shehu together with his wife and two sons had plotted to kill him with "a delayed-effect poison." But at the last moment, as Hoxha tells it, Shehu lost his nerve, flushed the poison down the lavatory, dismantled a

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secret radio-transmitter in his home, and proceeded to shoot himself. Not even Stalin, Hoxha's mentor, could produce such thrilling exposures during the Moscow drama of his great purges. Evidently Shehu, the "super agent", kept self-incriminating and otherwise compromising letters in his safe for some 40 years. I could find few who were prepared to concede it, but surely this "multiple agent" was a veritable genius. He managed to head a government for longer than any other Premier in Europe, yet apparently found time and inclination to plot on behalf of at least four major foreign Secret Services, including such jealous rivals as the CIA and the *KGB*. . . .

What may seem to Western observers a scenario for a farcical thriller meant, however, summary execution and long prison-terms for scores of people who in one way or another were affiliated with Shehu and his clan. I learnt from Arshin Xhezo, the editor-in-chief of the Party's daily newspaper, a few details about Figret Shehu (the wife of the Prime Minister, and herself a long-time Central Committee member and director of the Party school). She was put on trial. "I was there", he said, "and I can assure you she admitted everything. She confessed that her husband was the real organiser of all the conspiracies. There was great indignation in the hall. The outcry was such that many comrades demanded the death penalty. In the end, she received, I believe, 25 years. . . ." Tapes of her confession and those of her "fellow conspirators" were then played at special Party meetings. From others I heard roughly the same version of the Shehu case, and in the end I was given the ultimate reference: "You can read all about it in Enver's book. . . ."

Obviously Enver Hoxha has outmanoeuvred all his real, potential, and imagined rivals during the past four decades. This is why only he, his wife Nexhmije (a Central Committee member and Director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism), and a few others (they conveniently died earlier, all natural deaths) are the only hero figures in Albania's Communist Pantheon. Although Albanian internal politics may forever appear a mystery to outsiders, some of the "best-informed sources" I consulted in Tirana were convinced that the affair was really an old-fashioned "conflict of personalities", long suppressed, between the then-73-year-old "Supreme Leader" and his 68-year-old right-hand man. A dark combination of suspicion, gossip, illness, and an attack of nerves must have erupted at the crucial *Politburo* meeting on 16 December 1981. Whether there was a noisy "shoot-out" as alleged by the Yugoslavs, or whether Shehu really committed suicide, will probably never be known. But almost certainly it was not a clash of different or diametrically opposed political policies, but a vendetta of power-hungry politicians.

The liquidation of Mehmet Shehu and his powerful clan has created a little room at the top. Behind Hoxha is now Ramiz Alia, aged 59, who is currently head of state and Secretary of the Party's Central Committee. He began dabbling in political life (according to Yugoslav and Albanian exile sources) as a member of the "Young Fascist" organisation in Shkoder, his native town. But he joined the Communist Party in 1943 as a teenager, and after studying in Leningrad in the 1950s, he became finally a member of the ruling *Politburo* in 1960. He is a Northerner—that is, a Gheg (and not a Tosk like Hoxha)—but this seems at the moment to play no role. I saw him in Shkoder, arriving in a Mercedes 380 SL to address the district Party conference. Greeted by the usual organised crowd (plus a folk-dancing group), he moved with notable dignity and self-assurance. At the end he gave the clenched-fist salute and joined the rhythmic applause to the chanting of the name of Enver Hoxha. He is said to speak French, Russian, and Italian and is reported to be "by far the most intelligent man" in the shrinking group of confidants around the thin and stooping old leader.

Will there, then, be a peaceful transfer of power from Hoxha to the front-runner. Alia? Perhaps only the old Eagle knows. There is certainly no sign yet of a change in the rigidly centralised domestic policy, but the recent gestures of co-operation shown towards Greece and Italy were surely made with Hoxha's tacit consent. As long as he lives, no reconciliation—not even normalisation of relations—with the Soviet Union (not to mention the USA) is conceivable. Diplomatic relations with Bonn may be resumed in due course, although the dream of getting two billion DM as "compensation for war damages" is bound to remain unfulfilled. As far as Britain is concerned, the issue of compensation payments for the 44 lives lost in 1944 when two British ships struck mines in the Corfu Channel remains a stumbling-block.

Stalin's Black Magic

Like a creature left over from an earlier stage of evolution Hoxha is clearly revealed in the pages of his speeches and thoughts as one of the most skilled and successful—albeit on a limited scale—of the totalitarians of our disastrous century.

To Hoxha Stalin is the great hero, "the much-beloved and outstanding leader". This can be seen best in his volume of memoirs "With Stalin", a work of hagiographical proportions.

"The joy of my comrades, and I [*sic*] that we were appointed by the Central Committee of the Party to go to Moscow where we would meet the great Stalin was indescribable."

A second volume of memoirs, "The Khrushchevites", makes it quite clear that Hoxha had a very low opinion of those who chose to overthrow the glorious memory of Stalin. It is today perhaps rarer than it once was for leading national figures to engage publicly in vile personal abuse of other world leaders, but Hoxha does not pull his punches. He writes of Khrushchev, for example, "this disgusting, loud-mouthed individual", and in another passage, "what Bulganin said was bullshit" (this from the "official" translation). It gives one some feeling of the man himself.

Thus Stalin lives on in the career of Comrade Hoxha. Through him Stalin yet continues to work his black magic from the other side of the grave.

Michael Trend
in The Spectator (*London*)

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Deputy Foreign Minister Sokrat Plaka has categorically stated that the government in Tirana would "never pay" the £844,000 fine, as ordered by The Hague's International Court of Justice in 1949. Nor would it even consider the establishment of ties until the Albanian gold reserves (now worth some 30 million dollars) taken from Rome to London after World War II were returned.

The most sensitive and decisive problem remains the relationship with neighbouring Yugoslavia.

The Albanians genuinely condemn what they regard as the "brutal suppression of ethnic Albanians" in Kosovo, and they support the proposal to convert the autonomous province into a seventh constituent Yugoslav republic. Territorial demands are, curiously, disclaimed, for Hoxha is said to regard the brethren in Kosovo as subversive and corrupted elements, due to their "rotten revisionist environment"; they would pose a threat to the purity of his régime if they were "united with the Motherland." I have been told that many Albanian refugees, who fled from Kosovo or Macedonia to Albania, were quietly sent back to Yugoslavia. As long as Hoxha lives, the burden of the past is bound to make the search for a tolerable coexistence with Yugoslavia very difficult.

And after Hoxha? Who knows. Who would have suggested that this tiny country, hurling defiance at Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, and China, would go its own way and yet survive all the upheavals, or that Shehu, the heir apparent, would be "unmasked" in the twilight of the Hoxha era? The departure of the longest-serving national leader in the world, the ruthless architect and guiding spirit of this unique régime, will certainly create a yawning vacuum within the small ruling élite. For all the likely pledges of continuity by his successor (or successors), old clannish scores will be settled and quite new power alignments emerge. What haunts the Albanian establishment (and the foreign diplomats) is the question of "stability." Men who for so long controlled the army and security police have been shot, and their associates disgraced; supreme power may well lie uneasily in Hoxha's *Politburo,* which is currently composed of eleven voting members and five candidates.

Will a post-Hoxha Albania "thaw", and open itself to the world? A riddle, an enigma, a mystery. What is certain is that any Albanian leadership will be imbued with the same defiant spirit of nationalism; the tiny nation, always capable of solo and sudden turns, will remain a maverick in a changing world. Repeatedly in history Albania has played a significant role out of all proportion to its size, population, and resources. In view of its strategic position on the Adriatic, with the ethnic Albanians emerging as yet another "powder-keg" in Yugoslav politics, and the recurring minority and border problems with Greece, major and (in the long run) inevitable changes in Albanian foreign and domestic policy are bound to affect the balance of power in the Balkans. Albania may be at the heart of "darkest Europe", but the Sons of the Eagle could alter the course of East-West confrontation.

The Chinese Interpreter

Are you happy? Not since I was a child.
When did it stop? Directly I left school.
When was that? A dozen years ago.
Did you marry? Yes, at twenty-eight.
Why so late? It is the time allowed.
Is your home here? No, thousands of miles away
North, in Peking. And you work in Canton—
Any children? One boy. How old? Two months.
Is he like you? I have not seen him yet.
When will you see him? Next Spring Festival.
Only then can Chinese people travel.
When will that be? Three months more, in March.
And are you happy? I have told you. No.

His sad eyes blur through curtains of blind snow.

Robert Gittings

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LANGUAGE

"A Clear Provocation"

Esoteric Elements in Communist Language—By WERNER COHN

IN AUGUST of 1983, Andrei Berezhkov, the teen-aged son of a Soviet diplomat in Washington, apparently wrote a letter to President Reagan and another one to the *New York Times* in which he denounced the Soviet régime and asked for asylum in the United States. From press reports of the incident it would seem that the boy soon gave in to pressure from his father. Despite certain opportunities offered by American authorities, he hastily returned to the Soviet Union with his family. But before this denouncement there were some days of suspense during which both Soviet and American officials issued a variety of statements. By far the most interesting of these, to me, was reported by the *New York Times* (13 August):

> "A Soviet Embasssy official, contending that the incident was a 'clear provocation,' said Thursday that the letters were forgeries."

Provocation—what could the Soviet spokesman have meant? It is reasonable, from a Soviet point of view, to charge the Americans with forgery. It makes sense to charge them with a desire to score a propaganda point, whether or not the letters were genuine. But how could it conceivably be in the interest of the United States, no matter how dishonest, aggressive, or devious its officials might be, to "provoke" the Soviet Union in this instance? A charge of "provocation", without any accompanying explanation, can only blunt and obscure the much more plausible (and therefore more potentially damaging) charge of forgery.

Less than a month after the Berezhkov case—on 1 September to be exact—a Soviet military airplane fired upon a civilian South Korean airliner and killed 269 people. The two cases had little similarity except for the language of the accompanying Soviet propaganda.

On 4 September the Soviet press agency TASS described the Korean flight as "*a rude and deliberate provocation*." Two days later, a Soviet Embassy official in Ottawa declared it "*a deliberate provocation*" (*Vancouver Sun*, 7 September). In Moscow, 6 September, a lengthy TASS statement explained Soviet reasoning as follows:

> "It was not a technical error [on the part of the Korean crew]. The plan was to carry out without a hitch the . . . intelligence operation but if it was stymied to turn all this into a political provocation against the Soviet Union."

On 7 September Andrei Gromyko omitted any mention of intelligence gathering but again charged "*provocation*":

> "No matter who resorts to provocation of that kind, he should know that he will bear the full brunt of responsibility for it. . . . Those who today are still giving credence to [the American] falsehood will, no doubt, at long last understand the true aim of this major provocation. . . ."

Finally on 6 September Marshal Ogarkov, chief of the Soviet General Staff, conducted a press conference on the affair in Moscow. He charged a "deliberate, thoroughly planned intelligence operation", but only after beginning his speech by charging a "provocation perpetrated by the US secret services."

Elsewhere, pro-Moscow Communists spoke of both espionage and "*provocation*." On 17 October, the *New York Times* reported from the United Nations that Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Cuba and Mongolia had all "defended the Soviet Union, saying that the airliner was a spy plane and represented a provocation by the United States." William Kashtan, leader of the Canadian CP, declared that "The KAL incident . . . was an imperialist provocation." Vancouver's Communist *Pacific Tribune* of 19 October allowed itself a somewhat less formal style and said in an editorial that

> "hysterical mesmerism is evidently the major stock-in-trade of imperialism these days . . . there was a load of provocative garbage about the USSR 'knowing' it was a 747 . . . Reagan-led hysteria, hate-peddling, provocation and boycotts eagerly lapped up by every stray dog of imperialism. . . ."

Those who read Communist propaganda habitually are of course inured and may not even notice that the use of "*provocation*" in these contexts, from a non-Communist point of view, is strange, illogical, and self-defeating.

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Strange. Communist spokesmen are often attuned to current moods and fashions and can sound eminently reasonable to the Western ear. But there seems to be a sudden shift to the outlandish with an insistence on "provocation." The effect on *New York Times* commentators like Serge Schmemann (14 September) and John F. Burns (11 September) may be taken as typical: they stumble over the word and put it between puzzled quotation marks.

Illogical. The Soviets charge that the Americans wanted to both "provoke" and to spy. But a spy defeats his purpose if he provokes his target into any sort of action. The TASS statement of 6 September tries to get around this conundrum by claiming to know a secret American plan to use the incident as "provocation" only if the espionage mission should fail. The difficulty here is that this is not a plausible plan for an intelligence operation and none of the other Soviet statements try to rationalise in this manner. Moreover, there is a further problem that demands explanation. If the American plan had been to "provoke", and if the Soviets are so well aware of this American proclivity, why did they assist the American ploy by shooting at the plane? In other words if the whole thing was bait and the fish knew that it was bait, why did it bite?

Self-defeating. An argument is persuasive only if it is believable and coherent. To say that Americans are engaged in espionage against the Soviet Union is plausible; it is consistent with what most people know or suspect of the behaviour and the self-interest of modern governments. But to say that the Americans wish to "provoke" the Soviet Union is inconsistent with all such rational assumptions. There is no reason, at least no obvious reason, why Americans should wish to "provoke", and any propaganda based on such allegation cannot be successful. Nevertheless, the Soviets and the pro-Soviet Communists persist in such allegations, usually without the slightest attempt to explain the puzzling irrationality with which they charge their opponents.

Nor is this new to Communist propaganda. The Red Army started its invasion of Finland on 30 November 1939. Twelve days before, TASS reported from Helsinki that "*ruling circles in Finland [are] provoking war against the USSR.*" The day before the invasion, on 29 November, a resolution of Moscow writers and poets solemnly expressed "indignation and anger that the Finns, prompted by the warmongers, have permitted wanton provocation." The next day Molotov announced the invasion, declaring that "orders have been issued to the Red Army and Navy . . . to put an end to all Finnish provocations." (The German-Soviet invasion of Poland, two months earlier, was not accompanied by such charges. Hitler merely complained that "the Polish nation refused my efforts for a peaceful regulation of neighbourly relations", and the Soviets, then perhaps under Nazi influence, by and large limited their accusations against the Poles to that of "chauvinistic treatment of minorities".)

Definitions

Moscow

WESTERN Communist Parties which want to make themselves "wide open to the masses" were criticised yesterday in a "Pravda" article by Mr Vadim Zagladin, deputy chief of the Kremlin's International Information Department.

It appeared to be a response to last month's congress of the Finnish Communist Party, at which moderate "Eurocommunists" ousted pro-Moscow hardliners from all leading posts.

Mr Zagladin said that recently in certain countries a feeling had arisen that strictly orthodox Leninist Communist parties were no longer needed. But this denied the class criteria of Communism, the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, and the ideal of proletarian internationalism, he said.

IN SOVIET political language "proletarian internationalism" means unswerving loyalty to Moscow.

Mr Zagladin said the new type of Western Communist Party, "wide open to the masses," was really a retreat to the old social-democratic model. Experience had shown that social-democratic parties could never bring about revolution or socialism. According to Lenin, a Communist party must be a "vanguard party" of tightly-disciplined activists leading the working masses.

Nigel Wade
reporting from Moscow
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH *(London)*

HOW AND WHY the Communists came to their fondness for "*provocation*" becomes clear enough once we take a look at the Russia of the late 19th century.

The various revolutionary groups (socialist, anarchist, populist) on the one hand, and the government's secret police (the *Okhrana*) on the other, lived in an atmosphere of intrigue and conspiracy.

> "Secrecy [Lenin wrote in 1902] is such a necessary condition for [our] kind of organisation that all the other conditions (number and selection of members, functions, etc.) must be made to conform to it."[1]

Much of the secrecy had to do with spies which the revolutionary groups had in the police, and, more commonly, which the police had in the revolutionary organisations. Occasionally such agents entrapped ("provoked") revolutionaries into actions for which the police would then arrest them. Such provocation soon became merged with simple espionage in the minds of the revolutionaries. By the 1890s all police spies in the Russian revolutionary movement were called "*agents provocateurs*" (*provokatori*) by the members of these movements.[2]

The Russian cognates of "*provocation*" and of the French "*provocateur*" (i.e. *provokatsia* and *provokator*) took on even broader meanings in the writings of Lenin. It is rare that he used either expression in the narrow sense—i.e. actual entrapment or provocation. Most frequently his usage relates to a suspected police spy or informer. Sometimes Lenin used such terms even more broadly, as very general pejoratives whose only connection to the original "provocation" is the allegation of deviousness. Thus, in a polemical reference to the Social Democratic founders of the Weimar Republic, he charged that "over 15,000 German Communists were killed as a result of the

[1] "*What Is To Be Done?*", in *Collected Works*, vol. 5, pp. 475–6.
[2] Ronald Hingley, *The Russian Secret Police* (1970), p. 81 and *passim*. For a discussion of the French and Russian background to the institution of *agent provocateur*, see James H. Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Man* (1980), pp. 470–1.

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wily provocation and cunning manoeuvres of Scheidemann and Noske. . . ."[3]

There seems to be only one core idea that has remained with the term from beginning to end: a perception of a devious, conspiratorial enemy. But this idea is hidden to outsiders. To those to whom a "capitalist" world is engaged in a permanent conspiracy against the Soviet Union, and who see the need (as Lenin saw it) for a counter-conspiracy against these forces of darkness, the Communist usage of "provocation" becomes meaningful and natural. To everyone else the term must seem, as I have suggested, strange, illogical, self-defeating. It is a piece of esoterica, understandable only to the initiates.

SOCIAL SCIENTISTS accept as a commonplace that there is some reciprocal influence between language and culture (although the exact nature of this relationship is under continuing debate). Consequently a number of writers have looked at Communist ideology by studying the Communists' language.[4] But just about all of this literature has the crippling limitation of focusing on *manifest* ideology, on that which Communists profess.[5] These studies tell us about items like "*proletariat*", "*bourgeoisie*", "*imperialism*", and so forth. Not one of them discusses "provocation" or other terms which form part of the non-professed or *latent* ideology.[6]

But it is most especially the latent ideology that needs to be studied. This is not easy. How do we know what a man believes in the absence of his own testimony? In general we must judge his actions more than his words. But his words too can be revealing of thoughts he may wish to hide. This is particularly so when these words seem odd, incongruous, and inconsistent with what he professes as his creed.

Many items of Communist vocabulary may serve both manifest and latent functions. One such item, in many ways a curiosity, is "*red-baiting*." The expression has entered a number of American dictionaries in recent years, and is sometimes used by non-Communists who wish to make a point of being particularly liberal in respect to the rights of Communists. But generally its use is restricted to Communists and fellow-travellers. Moreover, unlike most other such technical Communist terms, there do not seem to be close equivalents in other languages.

My *Unabridged Webster's Dictionary* defines "red-baiting" as "*the act of baiting or harassing as a red often in a malicious or irresponsible manner.*"[7] Not wishing harassment is of course a straightforward, perfectly understandable sentiment; but it constitutes only one—the manifest—meaning of the expression. An additional usage may be illustrated by the following very typical illustration.

In 1983, the Vancouver City Council contained four aldermen who prominently associated themselves with Communist causes, but only one of these was a professed Party member. When a letter to a local newspaper alleged all four to be Communists, one replied as follows: "There are no members of Council who belong to the Communist Party . . . [the first writer's] approach to informing the public is red-baiting." In this context, the term constitutes a complaint that a Communist is being identified as a Communist.

The resistance to such identification is the other—the latent—meaning of "*red-baiting*" that emerges from the contexts in which the phrase appears in the English-language Communist literature.[8] Since the 1920s, international Communism has distinguished itself from all other political movements by having a portion of its membership deny its

"Russlish"

Moscow

The Russians have produced a further dictionary of new words [Adrian Room reports]. Some of the borrowings relate to entertainment and the mass media, and include **ays-revyu** *("ice-revue"),* **big-bit** *("big beat"),* **rok-opera**, **seksapil** *("sex appeal"),* **serial** *(as on TV),* **spirichuel, kheppi-end** *(as in an American movie) and* **eskapizm**.

The world of business is now more prominent, with **dizayn** *("design"),* **konsensus, marketing, menedzhment, nou-khau** *("know-how"),* **supermarket** *and* **fifti-fifti**.

As expected, new sports terms also appear, among them **vindsyorfing** *("windsurfing"),* **reyting-list** *(of a chess-player),* **sparring-partnyor**, **fol** *("foul"),* **fosbyuri-flop** *(in the high jump) and, if sport it is,* **striking** *(in the nude).*

Communications and transport have brought the strange-sounding **frivey** *("freeway") and* **khayvey** *("highway") as well as* **lendrover**, **treyler** *(behind a vehicle) and* **zebra** *("crossing").*

In other fields there are now **skrining** *(medically),* **poketbuk** *(paperback), and* **kitch** *("kitsch").*

Two of the most unusual words, however, are **zong** *(music-hall-style song in a play or opera) and* **sessun** *(hairstyle in the manner popularized by Vidal Sassoon).*

THE TIMES *(London)*

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[3] " '*Left-Wing*' *Communism—An Infantile Disorder*", *Collected Works*, vol. 31, p. 101.

[4] Some of the best work is in French. See especially Annie Kriegel's incisive article "*Langage et stratégie*" in her *Communismes au miroir français* (1974). Other references are cited in Bernard Legendre, *Le stalinisme français* (1980), pp. 47–9. Some of the books in English are: Harry Hodgkinson, *Doubletalk* (1955); R. N. Carew Hunt, *A Guide to Communist Jargon* (1957); Michael Waller, *The Language of Communism* (1972); Tom Bottomore (ed.), *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought* (1983). The latter two volumes may be considered part of the Marxist apologetic literature.

[5] An exception is Arthur Koestler's interesting story—in *The God That Failed*—of a young Communist girl who trapped herself by using the word "*concrete*" during a *Gestapo* interrogation.

[6] The distinction between "*latent*" and "*manifest*", introduced to sociology by Robert Merton, has been used to refer to at least three distinct contrasts: the conscious and the unconscious; the intended and the not-intended; and the professed and the non-professed. Here I use only the last of these three.

[7] I was able to identify two of the three individuals whom the dictionary cites as using the term. One is Henry Wallace, one-time Democratic Vice-President of the United States who ran as Presidential candidate for the Communist-organised "Progressive Party" in 1948. The other is the much more obscure Joseph Barnes, a New York journalist, and *Herald-Tribune* editor, who had once appeared before the US Senate's McCarren committee where he had been accused of (and had denied) a connection with Soviet Intelligence.

[8] A handy source is the volume *The Fur and Leather Workers Union* (1950) by the Communist historian Philip S. Foner, which gives an account of the Communist leadership of a trade union and deals with "*red-baiting.*"

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political affiliation.[9] (I do not refer here to countries in which the Party is illegal.) This desire to hide its political identity—especially necessary for activity in front organisations—is part of the latent ideology of the Communist movement, and it is not surprising to find it reflected in what amounts to a piece of technical terminology.

One of the curious aspects of this usage is that, like "*provocation*", it can only baffle the uninitiated. Sometimes the denial of Communist membership is transparently untruthful, as indeed it was in the Vancouver case. Moreover, from the point of view of the very outsider whom Communist propaganda wishes to influence, why should a Communist label be so vigorously resisted by Communist spokesmen? Doesn't this invite the impression that it is shameful to be a Communist? Here again we see something that is strange to the outsider, illogical, and self-defeating to the Communist propagandist.

The term appears only in English although the camouflaging occurs everywhere. We don't expect a one-to-one relationship between language and ideology,[10] but we might speculate on why the term is absent elsewhere: perhaps the small American and British Communist movements, lacking mass parties and mass followings, rely even more than those of the Continent on dissimulation, disguise, concealment. While Communists in France and Italy can get a respectful hearing under their own label, this is only barely possible in the English-speaking world. Perhaps the appearance of "*red-baiting*" as a term is related to the relative importance of the hidden when compared to the open Communist.

THE INTERPRETATION of the latent content in Communist language, like that of dreams, can offer temptations for loose theorising. The exegeses I have offered so far—a Communist penchant for conspiracy, a Communist tendency toward disguise and dissimulation—are not very daring because there is ample non-linguistic evidence for them. But I wish to offer two final suggestions of a more speculative nature.

(*1*) Both "*provocation*" and "*red-baiting*" give the impression of a Communist who is acted upon rather than acting on his own responsibility. He is victimised ("*baited*"), and when he acts it is not because he wishes to but because he is pushed ("*provoked*").[11]

(*2*) The second suggestion is of an altogether different nature. I have tried to show that the Communist's persistent use of technical vocabulary is related to latent ideology and strikes the outsider as strange, illogical, and self-defeating. Yet Communist propagandists persist in this usage, from the highest authorities in the Kremlin to the minor functionary in Canada. By doing so, I suggest, they give evidence that ideology, properly understood as including the latent, can take precedence over an opportunist desire to influence the Western public. Another way of putting this is that no matter how worldly-wise the Communists may be, they remain, at least to some extent, the prisoners of an irrational ideology that prevents them from any real communication with the rest of us.

[9] Perhaps the first prominent Communist who did this was also the founder of the first Communist front organisations, the German Willi Münzenberg. (Münzenberg later employed Arthur Koestler in Paris.) Afterwards he broke with the CP, and was mysteriously assassinated, apparently by the Soviet secret police. See David Pike, *German Writers in Soviet Exile* (1981).

[10] Discussion about the nature of the language-culture relationship tends to centre on the "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis." For a balanced statement, see the article by Charles F. Hockett, "Chinese Versus English: An Exploration of the Whorfian Theses", in Harry Hoijer (ed.), *Language In Culture* (1954).

[11] Just so is a man freed from feelings of guilt. Koestler has spoken of the Communist's "blissfully clean conscience" when engaged in what others would consider wrong: in *The God That Failed* (ed. Richard Crossman, 1949), p. 33. A similar explanation has been advanced for the Rosenbergs' consistent protestations of innocence in the face of overwhelming evidence that they were spies. See Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, *The Rosenberg File* (1983), pp. 340, 547.

Talkback

I used to squat and watch the mangle trickle
As she twisted suds and water out of towels.
We'd chatter while the tin bath filled,
A torrent running out on cockney vowels.

Big holds of words nudged wet wharfs, tongued
Fogged quays around the East End docks;
Slight h's, t's, all sunk, knocked off; demolished
Like these red and yellow building blocks.

Nan's dead, but words bud in the baby's mouth,
Though her new wordstock is still green.
It's as if I hear live echoes round my house,
No distance dropped like bricks between.

Kim Baker

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LETTERS

Zinoviev's Fallacy

I HAVE READ very carefully the arguments put forward by Professor Zinoviev in conversation with George Urban, published in the April and May 1984 issues of ENCOUNTER. Looked at as the subjective perceptions of one who is both a Russian nationalist and a believer in the ultimate triumph of Communism in its Soviet form, his opinions and insights are both entertaining and informative. It is his claim to "scientific objectivity", to have established a theory based on empirical evidence giving rise to objective universal laws "with the force of the laws of physics", which requires closer scrutiny.

Professor Zinoviev takes as his basic premise the assumption that only a product of Soviet society is capable of understanding and evaluating that society. Other assumptions and personal opinions, fundamental to his argument, include the following: "Communism has fundamentally changed human relations"; "Once a Soviet man, always a Soviet man"; "Soviet society cannot be destroyed in a thousand years." Having adopted these premises as the starting point of his reasoning, he attempts to give his subsequent arguments the force of logical inevitability. But since these statements are themselves open to doubt and conflicting opinion, they do not provide a valid *a priori* basis for establishing universal laws. Any conclusions drawn by Professor Zinoviev are therefore philosophically questionable; and his claim to scientific method must be suspect.

The other aspect of Zinoviev's reasoning technique further demonstrates its essentially non-philosophical nature. In requiring the empirical evidence to support the conclusions, he dismisses out-of-hand all argument, evidence, or opinion which tends to support other conclusions. In particular his attribution of base motives to Western historians and Sovietologists seems to be the result of prejudice rather than reason. For example, on the subject of General Hackett's scenario for a Third World War he says: "General Hackett wants the Soviet Union to disintegrate, and he predicts events in accordance with his own wish." This is at variance with General Hackett's own statements on the subject. General Hackett believes, and has publicly expressed the view, that the continuing existence of a stable Soviet power-bloc is in fact a safeguard to world peace. Is Zinoviev unaware of this, or does he merely choose to ignore it?

THIS TENDENCY on the part of Zinoviev to regard empirical fact only as a means of establishing the validity of his opinions leads him into some curious contradictions. In an attempt to refute the widely held belief that the non-Russian republics of the Soviet Union are subject to a relentless campaign of Russification, he states, with the assurance of one expressing an incontrovertible truth, that "it is virtually impossible for a Russian to get a job in the Ukraine." But later, when his requirement is to explain the non-existence in Ukraine of opposition to the siting there of Soviet nuclear weapons, he says, with equal certitude: "He [the Ukranian] will find that he is helpless. He is part of a Russian group at his workplace and in his living quarters. He will lose his job if he steps out of line." Zinoviev has spent much time in Ukraine and claims to know it well. Both the above statements cannot at the same time be true. Therefore one or the other must be a deliberate falsehood, uttered only to support the opinions he has reached independent of empirical evidence.

Professor Zinoviev also gives us totally contradictory evidence on Soviet consciousness and the character of his so-called "Homo Sovieticus" where these examples support the particular conclusion he wishes us to reach. Denunciations, and a preoccupation with material welfare and promotion within the system, seem incompatible with "Soviet life is imbued with a sense of common purpose, which imparts a firm orientation and a new and rich consciousness."

In conclusion, it would seem that the "empirical evidence" used by Professor Zinoviev to establish his theory could be equally used to reach radically different conclusions. It is only his personal beliefs which lead his arguments in one particular direction, and such a basis cannot give rise to "objective universal laws."

HUGH NOLAN

Kingston upon Thames
Surrey

Kampelman's Russia

MAY I comment on Ambassador Max M. Kampelman's contribution to his dialogue with Dr George Urban in your February and March issues?

Kampelman claims to have opened a new front against the Soviet Government via the Helsinki process and that the Madrid Agreement of 1983 already reflects a measure of Western success. The Communist nations who signed it, he tells us, now find themselves more "accountable" than before. He may well be right. Few governments in the world, however wicked, do not endorse some code or other of human values, this being the tribute that vice normally pays to virtue. By acting as a humanist terrier and worrying the Kremlin, this American Ambassador may at times make it feel a little worried.

But is not Dr Kampelman's general perspective somewhat provincial? When George Urban tentatively puts it that Russia has never been much of a place for human rights, he replies thus: "There is something within every human being that strives for a measure of freedom and a measure of mutual respect. One guarantee that this is so is the continuing influence of Christianity in the Soviet Union. Another is the heritage there of 19th-century Russian socialism and its great interest in French and German thought. . . ."

True, late 19th-century Imperial Russia was humming with every kind of social idea within its few-million-strong intelligentsia which wished to be rid of autocracy. But none of the activists ever managed to gain a large distinct following. The main reason, I suggest, was that Russia was a *religious* society, held together not by "mutual respect" but by the sense of coexistence before God. All the great literature shows this togetherness right up to Chekhov. Into this huge, primitive, half-great country the victorious Bolshevik wing of Russian Marxism injected not justice or human dignity or reason (all alien to the mass) but a facile, flattering and nonsensical messianism. As Nicolai Berdyaev well saw, the phenomenon was, what it could only be, collectivist; and the organisational result the "*muzhiko-military*" régime of Lenin and Stalin.

This régime is still on the march. And why not? Dissidence is sparse. It is quite unashamed of the use of force. But it has not "arrived." And human rights, surely, are characteristic of successful, grand, arrived societies such as 18th-century France. It would be a pity if Ambassador Kampelman's useful harassment of Soviet functionaries, men quite without "hearts or minds" in his sense, ever induced him to imagine that he was influencing Soviet society itself. That task will be the business of radio, television and written propaganda over many decades; until, that is, so-called European Russia is stimulated to become European.

CHARLES JANSON

London

Replying to Mishan

WHAT WOMEN REALLY want—to answer Freud's famous question, and E. J. Mishan's criticism of the Women's Movement (in ENCOUNTER, January)—is to have the opportunity to discover the real scope of their natures, and not to find themselves trapped into any one role, however convenient, or even essential to others. It is very dangerous to generalise on what is "natural" to a group, as this is the classical method of justifying exploitation.

Speaking of inborn tendencies, however, any anthropologist will point out that primitive tribes, even hunters, rely heavily on the food-gathering of women. Protection is another matter, since we belong to the only race which habitually preys on its own members. Then, are women always motivated by a wish for prestige and material advantage, let alone a desire to compete with men, when they seek to take part in the world's work? Perhaps they only wish to use

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their talents more fully? I am not surprised that men often find their work very trying. With their instinct to shape and order, could it not be said that they often arrange things in too cut-and-dried a fashion? Living beings are turned into mechanisms, as in factory-farming, and persons into animated functions. So work becomes monotonous and acquisitive drive creates ruthless extremes of competitiveness. Much energy is actually counter-productive. If women were able to effect a reorganisation of the whole framework as part of their contribution, the system might be greatly humanised.

THEN, WHY SHOULD not historians be interested in all aspects of the lives of half the human race? It is not that men have set out to ill-treat women in the past. Simply that people tend to make objects and systems in their own image and to arrange things for their own convenience. But, if cruelty is considered, remember the footbindings, the millions of girl babies who have been and still are destroyed. Over our recent barbarities consider the added suffering of women in the camps who agonised, knowing that their children were being ill-treated, and who were molested, both by the guards and by their fellow prisoners. Conditions in the Gulag are poignantly depicted in Eugenia Ginzburg's *Into the Whirlwind* and *Within the Whirlwind* (Collins/Harvill, 1967 and 1981). Then, even if only soft porn is regarded and "snuff films" left out, many women may not be happy to be looked at as appetising "dishes", though others snatch at the chance to make much more money than normally comes their way.

It is *choice* for women that has been fought for. If some choose to be completely domesticated that is their right. They might remember how their predecessors scorned single women, though. And Mary Kenny's well-meant remarks spring from a confusion between the cult of Permissiveness; and the Women's Movement; some members of which, falling into their besetting sin of glorifying masculine patterns at all costs, have joined the cult. Others see it as a movement by men for women. If social structures were stretched to meet real human needs, men might gain better balanced lives (and live longer, too), and women be able to use all of themselves.

Russian men's selfishness, as well as Communist dogmatism, is the cause of the trouble in the USSR. Again, care for the environment is a basic principle of the Women's Movement. Concern for ecology owes much to Rachel Carson's work, incidentally. Anyone wishing to know why that movement was inevitable might take into account widespread education; especially higher education. Women have looked around them at the world with a more critical gaze and have not liked what they saw. There has been a long tradition of feminine protests in the past (recorded, for instance, in Dale Spender's *Man Made Language*) but these protests were isolated and were disregarded. Men should have kept women ignorant if they did not want to be called to account for their actions.

DÉSIRÉE HIRST

Department of English
University College
Swansea

Poets Wanted

IN 1986 CHATTO & WINDUS plan to publish the first in a series of poetry books which will contain selections of work by six new writers whose poems have not previously been collected. May I use your Letters page to ask all those who wish to submit poems for consideration to send them to me at the address below? Submissions should arrive not later than 1 July 1985.

ANDREW MOTION

Chatto & Windus
40 William IV Street
London WC2N 4DF

Laski, Attlee, & "the Hang of It"

I HAVE only recently seen the June 1984 issue of ENCOUNTER, and I do not know whether any other reader has forestalled me in assuring Professor F. A. Hayek ("Letters") that Harold Laski was not taken seriously for long—if at all—in the Labour Party.

Alastair Cooke opened his review in *The New Yorker* (14 March 1983) of a book about Ronald Reagan with this paragraph on Laski:

> "When Harold Laski was made chairman of the British Labour Party after its astonishing electoral sweep in the wake of the Allied victory in Europe, there was more than a ripple of curiosity on both sides of the Atlantic about the likely impact on British politics of a towering intellectual. How would this professor, this double-domed political theorist, intimate of Justice Holmes, historian of everything from Marxism and European liberalism to the American Presidency, synchronize his vast knowledge with the day-to-day know-how of Prime Minister Clement Attlee, the upper-middle-class settlement worker, Fabian convert, survivor of Gallipoli, wartime deputy of Churchill, and first-rate parliamentarian? Many years later, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* offered a dim but fair obituary judgement: 'His persistent efforts . . . to work out a philosophy for the British socialist movement did not bear much fruit.' The 1945 onlookers did not have so long to wait. Attlee, who never used ten sentences where one would do, put it crisply: 'Rum thing about Harold—never got the hang of it'. . . ."

As I remember it, the sentence of Attlee's cited freely in the purlieus of the London School of Economics in the 1930s, long before Labour came to power, was, "Poor Harold—never got the hang of it"—and what he hadn't got the hang of was that politics is about power and how to get it.

DAFNA ALLON

Jerusalem

Ash of Nectar

ALL OF US here try to make head-and-tail of changing American words and phrases, and it may well be that M. J. Lasky's ascription of important influence to the likes of Wordsworth and Hemingway (ENCOUNTER, February, "No Way, to be going with it, like it is . . .") is correct. But somehow I suspect that characters like "Mrs Grundy" are still alive and well, and probably still shaping the American language strongly.

I note the following in the *New York Times* for 1 February of this year. And to understand how good old prudery still plays a blue-stockinged role on the US scene, one has to remember how embarrassed American wine-drinkers have always been—on the Rhine, but not only there—when faced with the choice of *Kröver Nacktarsch* as recommended by the vineyard expert. Even the toughest of GIs used to wince before bringing the words across their lips; and the most seasoned New York tourists could hardly bring themselves to look at the distinguished old label on the bottle (a pair of gleaming buttocks, for "bare-assed" was the valuable copyrighted emblem) of the famous wine of the same name.

Well, you should also bear in mind that a somewhat off-colour difficulty of this kind can ruin a whole export programme! The Americans have taken to wine in a big way, and why should *Kröver Nacktarsch* be left behind (if the Editor will pardon the expression)?

So back to the *New York Times* of February where you can find the news of "the most legitimate sale" of "1978 classic wines", and from the *Liebfraumilch* to the *Kreuznach Spätlese*, they were all available and evidently priceworthy. But there was no *Kröver Nacktarsch*! For it had become—no, not because of Wordsworth and Hemingway, but according to Mrs Grundy's old, sensitive blue-pencilling style—something new, changing only a few letters: "*Kroever Nectarasch*"! "Ash of nectar"—whatever could that be? But if nobody knows nobody can be embarrassed. Even "classic wines" need a little bowdlerisation over here.

SABINA LIETZMANN

New York City

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Life & Letters Today

London

ENIGMA: **Throughout the history of the English language [James McDonald writes], the letter *n* in the word "*an*" has proved slightly unstable. For example what is now called *a notch* was once called *an otch* and *a newt* was *an ewt*.**

What we now know as *a nickname* was earlier *a neckename*, and earlier still *an ekename*. An "ekename" was an additional or supplementary name (what we would now call a surname).

We rarely use the word "eke" on its own nowadays except in the phrase "to eke out" (meaning to supplement).

Sometimes the volatile "*n*" has moved in the opposite direction. What we call *an adder* was once *a nadder*, *an apron* was *a napron*, and *an auger* (a tool) was *a nauger*.

From the French we have *an orange* which should have been *a norange* and *an umpire* which was originally *a numphire*, literally a "nonpair", an impartial odd man out.

Also from France came the word *numbles* meaning the entrails of a deer; knocking the "*n*" off the front gave us the word *umbles*. Umbles provided food for hunting dogs and for the poorer classes. But the association between umbles and humility cried out for a pun; and, although pie made from *umbles* is still eaten, those who have suffered humiliation are said to eat not *umble pie* but *humble pie*.

SUNDAY EXPRESS

Moscow

ROVER BOYS ABROAD: **Mr James Callaghan was last in Moscow in 1975 as Foreign Secretary, with Sir Harold Wilson, who was then Prime Minister. He seemed to experience a sense of déjà vu.**

> **"We went to the Bolshoi" he recalled. "I sat at the end of the row in the royal box. Harold sat in the middle. I leaned across and asked him what it felt like to be in the Tsar's seat. He thought for a moment and replied, 'What's it like to be in Rasputin's?' "**

THE TIMES

London

FALSE FRIENDS: *We've talked before [Godfrey Smith writes] about* **faux amis:** *those words that look the same in French and English but mean quite different things. Now two Leeds dons, Philip Thody and Howard Evans, have produced a most useful book on the subject. As they point out,* **des coups de téléphone abusifs** *doesn't mean abusive telephone calls; it means improper use of the phone, as when making private calls from the office without paying.*

Une affaire *is not what we mean by it but a legal or political case as in* **L'affaire Dreyfus:** *they would use* **fune aventure** *or* **une liaison** *for what we mean by affair.*

A **brassière** *is a baby's long-sleeved vest or a life-jacket; a* **commode** *is a chest of drawers. Most reassuring news of all though: in French* **un ball-trap** *is a clay-pigeon shoot; not what you thought.*

SUNDAY TIMES

Tokyo

HOT STEAM: **That familiar sign in certain Japanese quarters—"TURKISH BATH", in Japanese "Toruko Buro"—will now be disappearing from public gaze. Only the house front is affected by the new official prohibition; what goes on inside remains unchanged.**

The protest against the misuse of a traditional Turkish institution of much-admired hygiene and cleanliness came from a resident Turkish scientist, Nürset Sanjakli. He took his campaign as high as the Minister of Health, Kozo Watanabe. The defamation of the Turkish name was intolerable.

The Japanese news-agency Kyodo reports that the "Association of Turkish Baths" in Japan decided, after a two-day emergency meeting, to find a new acceptable name for their establishments. "Turkish Baths" are in Japan synonymous with houses of prostitution.

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG (Munich)

Virginia, USA

BARDOLOGY: *An American firm publishing schoolbooks has cut 420 lines from Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet because passages in the plays are "too sexually explicit."*

The board of education in Virginia has ordered an investigation into the cuts.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rome

MILITARY PROGRESS: *The bayonet, used on battlefields for centuries, can no longer be considered a weapon of war, Italy's Supreme Court has ruled.*

The court rejected demands by the Venice public prosecutor that a Padua man found in possession of a bayonet should receive the severest penalties under Italian law for illegal possession of "battlefield weapons." The court said modern techniques and technology had rendered obsolete the use of the bayonet in favour of more powerful means of mass warfare.

REUTERS

Toronto, Canada

THE EGG ET MOI: **Canadian government officials trying to promote wider use of French in the largely English-speaking province of New Brunswick, have been pelted with eggs, called "frog lovers" and told to "get back to France."**

French-speaking residents, who form 33% of the population, now have 30% of government jobs but fewer than 20% of posts in the senior Civil Service.

A practice of advertising for bilingual civil servants is excluding Anglophones from jobs—many Francophones learn English but comparatively few Anglophones learn French.

Nurses are objecting to bilingualism being required in hospitals. A government plan to spend £75,000 to put up the flag of the Acadians, the French-speaking minority, on key government buildings has annoyed many.

A recommendation that an office of official languages be set up to enforce bilingualism is being opposed as an attempt to provide "language police."

A government-appointed commission has been out on tour holding public hearings and its members and officials have been pelted with eggs and shouted down.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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Middle Eastern Vistas

BARGAINING FOR REALITY

The Construction of Social Relations in a Muslim Community

Lawrence Rosen

In this revealing study of Middle Eastern society, Rosen focuses on the people in and around the Moroccan city of Sefrou. He shows how, for them, reality consists of the network of obligations formed out of a repertoire of relationship possibilities which are defined by a set of essentially negotiable concepts. He shows how this view of reality affects concepts of time, character, and narrative style and how the relations between men and women, Arabs and Berbers, Muslims and Jews test the limits of interpersonal negotiations.

THE IMMORTAL ATATÜRK

A Psychobiography

Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz

In a fascinating interpretation of the life of the remarkable man who transformed Turkey into a modern nation, the authors trace the psychological origins of Atatürk's lifelong mission to save and repair his beloved country. They follow him as he developed from oedipal son to father-in-chief of Turkey, showing how his belief in himself as savior impelled him through military achievement to political power. Illus.

THE SHADOW OF GOD AND THE HIDDEN IMAM

Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi'ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890

Said Amir Arjomand

In this unparalleled study, Arjomand explores the intellectual, historical, theological, and social foundations of Shi'ite Islam. "He always teases us into thought and forces us to reexamine old assumptions. This book deserves to be read by anyone concerned with the relationship between religion and state in Iran and Islam."–Shaul Bakhash, *The New Republic*

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